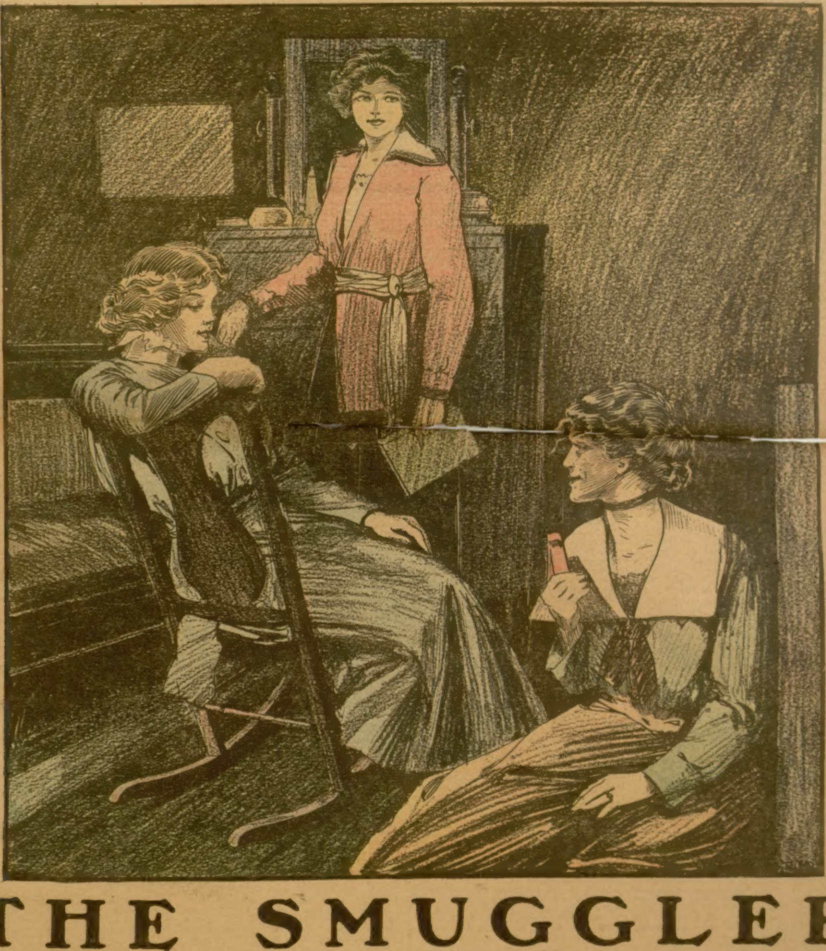
CHICAGO LEDGER

VOL. XLIV. NO. 47. CHICAGO, ILL., SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1916. SINGLE COPIES 5 CENTS



THE SMUGGLER

Or,

We Three Girls

By Ella Middleton Tybout

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CHAPTER I.

IF ELIZABETH did not indulge in hay-fever every year, and, consequently, have to be very careful about breathing where there is vegetation, it would never have happened; or, rather, we would not have fo there furth mixed up with it.

I don't know, after all, whether it was not Gabrielle's gold beads that were to blame, just as much as Elizabeth's hay-fever; for if the string had not broken, everything would have been all right.

Gabrielle and Elizabeth are friends. They know each other's inmost thoughts, and their past lives contain no reservations whatever from one another—which seems a little hard on the men whose pictures they have framed and preserved as relics.

I am their friend also, but I still have a few undivulged thoughts, as well as a modest number of reservations. My name is Eliza, but I prefer to spell it Elise, and perhaps I am a little envious of the other two, having lost my own alter ego by her marriage and never replaced her. However that doesn't belong to the story, which really begins on the steamer that carried us to Canada.

Elizabeth had heard of an island up there where hay-fever was unknown, and she read us so many extracts concerning it from a booklet she kept in her work-basket that about the first of June we cut adrift from our respective families and started off to spend the summer there. We could do this with propriety, for we had all passed the pin-feather age, altho I wish it distinctly understood we were still a long way from being stringy about the throat.

We were sitting on the deck of the steamer, watching the moonlight on the water and enjoying ourselves very much indeed, when a man came around the corner of the cabin and sat down near us, as, of course, he had a perfect right to do. Suddenly Gabrielle, who was next him, jumped up and clutched my arm.

"Come away," she whispered. "Come away."

And, of course, we came forthwith. She was quite pale and trembling when we reached the cabin, and for a few minutes was unable to satisfy our curiosity; but at last she spoke.

"He threw a chair into the water," she said, in an awed voice.

"Oh!" said Elizabeth, with evident disgust, "is that all? I thought it was something interesting."

"It was quite enough," insisted Gabrielle. "I was afraid he might throw me next. You should have seen his face and heard him muttering."

"What did he mutter?" Elizabeth liked the whole of a story or none at all.

"I couldn't hear. But I think"—Gabrielle glanced around apprehensively—"I think he's crazy, and I don't like being on a boat with an unguarded insane man. You never know what they are going to do. Besides, he looked at me."

I did not blame him there, for Gabrielle is well worth looking at, especially when she is gazing at the moon with the uplifted expression she reserves for that purpose. I sometimes wonder why she doesn't think some man on earth worth it, but she says distance lends enchantment in such matters, and I suppose she knows her own affairs best.

"Perhaps his keeper is somewhere around," speculated Elizabeth. "Let's go back and see if he's still there."

So we reconnoitered stealthily, and saw him sitting quietly smoking and not looking at all dangerous—a rather tall, spare man in blue serge clothes, with a cap pulled down over his eyes, and the air of one who is quite satisfied with his surroundings. It was a cool night, and the deck was almost deserted, so he had our secluded corner behind the cabin all to himself, and we could stand just outside the door and examine him at our leisure.

"He looks just like anybody else," said Elizabeth, plainly disappointed.

"I didn't say he had a hump on his back," returned Gabrielle, indignantly. "I said he threw a chair overboard—and so he did."

"It is a new way of beginning a flirtation," I murmured, "but customs differ in various places. Perhaps you should have sent your chair after it, by way of acknowledging the attention. Oh!"

For at that moment he leaned for[illegible] interest at the chair beside him, felt its back and legs, poised it lightly in the air, and shot it over the railing into the water below, where we saw it bobbing in the foam in our wake.

"There!" triumphed Gabrielle. "Now what do you say?"

We said nothing, for just then he reached for another chair. This time, however, he was not bent on destruction, for he merely detached a dark object hanging on its back. For the second time Gabrielle clutched my unfortunate arm, which was quite bruised with her attentions.

"It's my bag!" she exclaimed. "My new shopping-bag. I left it hanging on my chair—and he's opening it! Oh, the wretch!"

The "wretch" proceeded to investigate the contents of the bag, and carefully examined each article as he drew it forth. First a pair of gloves, and then a handkerchief, which he held critically to his nose after scrutinizing the monogram.

"I hope he likes it!" ejaculated Gabrielle, in an indignant whisper.

Next a small powder puff and a bit of chamois skin (regarded with tolerant amusement), a stubby pencil minus a point and much dented from thoughtful biting (having been used to calculate our expenses), twenty-five cents, three street-car tickets, a latch-key, and a square card, at which he looked long and earnestly.

"It is a good thing you wear your money around your neck," remarked Elizabeth, but Gabrielle pointed an outraged finger at the unconscious blue serge back.

"It is our picture," she said—"we three together. Did you ever!"

Finding the moonlight not bright enough for his purpose, he moved nearer the cabin window, happening as he did so to glance behind him. Springing to his feet, he lifted his cap and advanced toward us, bag in hand, but with one accord we turned and fled. It was best to take no chances within reach of his hands. We had no desire to follow the chairs over the railing.

I went with Gabrielle and Elizabeth to their stateroom, where we spent some time in discussing the strange incident and the fact that our picture was still in the supposed lunatic's possession. At length I bade them good night and set out to find my own berth, as we had not been fortunate enough to get adjoining rooms.

In the saloon I found the stewardess, who at once accosted me, with an apologetic cough.

"Oh, if you please, miss," she said, "could I speak to you?"

The burden of her speech was a request that I share my stateroom with a lady who had not able to secure one, and who was much fatigued.

"And I thought, miss," she concluded, "that as you have a room to yourself, perhaps you would be so kind as to let her have the spare berth, since it is the only one on the boat. Would you mind obliging her?"

I did mind very much, and was about to say so in no uncertain language when the stewardess twitched my skirt warningly.

"That's her," she whispered, "over there under the light. Speak low, if you please, miss, and don't go for to refuse the poor dear a bed—don't, now."

I looked in the direction indicated, and felt glad I had not spoken. It was a comparatively young face which rested against the back of the chair, but so pale, so worn, so unutterably weary, that one wondered instinctively what blow fate had seen fit to deal this woman to so rob her of her girlhood. The pitiless glare of the electric light fell directly upon her, accentuating the purple shadows beneath her eyes and the hollows in her cheeks, while her listless pose suggested heartsickness as well as fatigue. One hand lay on the arm of her chair, and as I advanced toward her I noticed the gleam of her wedding ring.

"The stewardess tells me you have no stateroom," I said. "I am alone, and shall be glad to share mine with you."

The heavy lids lifted slowly, and I found myself looking into a pair of wistful dark eyes with an unanswered question in them.

"Thank you," she said, in a sweet, low voice. "You are most kind. I know it is not pleasant to share one's room with a stranger, but I will come gladly, for I am very tired. My husband——"

She paused abruptly and a faint color tinged her cheeks as a man approached and bent over her with an unmistakable air of possession.

"It's no use, Juliet," he said; "I can't get you a stateroom at any price, and you are regularly done up, too! We must manage with one of these sofas."

"It is all right, dear," she replied gently. "This young lady is good enough to offer to share her room with me. My husband, Mr. Graham, Miss——"

I supplied the name and bowed to Mr. Graham, looking curiously at him as I listened to his effusive thanks.

The man evidently possessed the vitality his wife lacked. His every movement indicated that he was filled to the finger-tips with vibrant, pulsing life, and one admired him with the admiration one involuntarily accords a perfect specimen of the animal kingdom, whether man or beast. Perhaps his lips were a trifle too full and red, and his teeth rather unpleasantly [illegible] gleamed under his dark mustache; perhaps, also, there was something in his large black eyes now and then which might cause a woman to blush and turn aside if he looked too long at her; but his manner was very gentle as he bent over his wife, and he collected her wraps and helped her to rise with genuine solicitude.

The stewardess was waiting to show Mrs. Graham the room, and I decided to remain in the saloon until she had retired, so I sat down in a green plush chair and amused myself watching my fellow-passengers and speculating as to their destinations. I had just determined that a fat old lady opposite was the mother of a large family and going to visit a married daughter, when the cabin door opened and Mr. Graham returned alone.

He raised his hat as he passed, hesitated a moment, then seated himself on the arm of an adjoining chair.

"We really owe you a debt of gratitude," he said. "Of course, I can get along perfectly well anywhere, but Mrs. Graham is not strong. She has had a tiresome journey, and tonight seemed to be the last straw. I suppose you noticed how awfully done up she was."

"She certainly seemed very tired."

"She will be all right tomorrow, after a night's rest — thanks to you. We are going to spend the summer in Canada. I think the climate there will benefit her, it is so invigorating. And you? Are you also bound for Canada, and are you traveling alone?"

I replied somewhat curtly that I was with friends, for I had no desire to prolong the conversation. Mr. Graham, however, lingered with the manner of one who has something on his mind, but finds expression difficult. At last he rose and said good night, after offering to look out for our baggage when he landed in the morning.

"And, by the way," he remarked carelessly, "don't be alarmed if my wife should talk a bit in her sleep. She does it now and then, especially if she is overtired. She is apt to dream, I think, and sometimes talks a lot of gibberish. I trust you may not be disturbed, but I thought I ought to warn you. Good night again, and many thinks."

So Mrs. Graham talked in her sleep! I thought rather ruefully of my prospects for a peaceful night as I slowly walked the length of the cabin—for mine was an outside stateroom, and it was necessary to go on deck to reach it.

The moon shone brilliantly, a path of silver light falling across the water, which rippled and sparkled alluringly. I was so fascinated by the beauty of the scene that when I reached my door I did not enter at once, but leaned over the railing, watching the white foam that marked our course, and quite forgetful of the flight of time.

After a while two men approached, and one of them fitted a key in the door next mine. As he stooped to examine the lock, the moonlight shone full upon his face, and I recognized our friend in blue serge with the strange aversion to chairs. I wondered if the person with him was an attendant, and hoped the partition wall was substantial. I was also conscious of a strong desire to waken Gabrielle and Elizabeth and seek shelter with them.

The light was burning in my stateroom when at last I forced myself to enter it, and Mrs. Graham lay asleep in the lower berth, her lips slightly parted and her face resting upon her hand. Nature had meant to be kind to this woman, and had been liberal indeed with her gifts. The lashes which swept the pale cheeks were dark and curling, like the luxuriant hair carelessly pushed aside on the pillow, while the face itself, tho thin and haggard, had evidently once been a perfect oval, with a singular purity of outline and innocence of expression.

As noiselessly as possible, I made my preparations for the night and climbed into my berth, turning off the electric light with a sense of relief that the switch was within easy reach of my hand.

I lay staring into the darkness, wide awake and alert to every sound. A murmur of voices came from the next room, interspersed with occasional subdued laughter, and at last I heard a window opened, and some one apparently leaned out with an ejaculation of relief.

"Jove, what a night! And to think of wasting it in a cell like this! Blake, you old sinner, have you no soul for the beautiful? Look at the light on the water."

The reply was inaudible. Evidently Blake had gone sensibly to bed, but the voice continued undaunted:

"I say, wouldn't it be jolly to dive off the railing and swim a mile or so? I declare, I've half a mind to do it!"

I caught my breath apprehensively. Suppose he should jump? A match was now scratched, and the odor of a cigarette floated thru my slatted blind.

"Maybe you think you're on an ordinary steamer, Blake, but it's nothing of the kind. It is a royal barge belonging to the gods, and it's carrying the Three Graces to attend Apollo—I'm Apollo, you understand, and Venus isn't in it this trip. I think—of course I'm not yet sure—but I think Thalia is the chosen one."

The berth creaked plaintively, and a second match was struck. Apparently Blake considered it wiser to join his patient at the window.

"Don't be an ass," he said, with a slow drawl, but his companion merely whistled a few bars of an old song.

"'How happy could I be with either, were t'other dear charmer away,' eh, Blake?" he laughed. "That's the way with this world—always too much or too little."

"Quite enough for you, I think."

"Not a bit of it. The thing I want most I lack, but some time, some how, I'm going to get it."

Silence for a few moments, then he resumed more gravely:

"Of course it's no end jolly to have you with me, Blake, but it is a queer business for you to take up, and I don't altogether like it. You were built for better things."

"It is interesting work, and said to require special fitness."

"No doubt. Well, 'it's an ill wind,' you know, and, since it blew you my way, I've no kick coming. But, old chap, there is no use in publishing what you are doing, and for both our sakes it is better you should pass simply as my guest."

"As you please, Bennett. Now, for Heaven's sake, come to bed."

I don't know whether I had actually been asleep, or whether I was merely in that delightful state of half-consciousness which precedes profound slumber, but suddenly I started up broad awake, with the echo of a cry ringing in my ears. Was I dreaming? I wondered, for I heard nothing but the sound of the waves against the boat.

Then it came again, from just beneath me, a sobbing, frightened cry infinitely distressing to hear, and instinctively I turned on the light and jumped to the floor.

Mrs. Graham sat upright in her berth, her dark eyes looking blankly into space, and her hands tightly clasped.

"Not again, Harry," she moaned; "not again—so soon."

I took her hands in mine and spoke to her, calling her by name several times, and gradually the blank look in her eyes was replaced by utter bewilderment as she began to realize her surroundings.

"What is it?" she said. "What have I been doing?"

"You were dreaming," I suggested. "A bad dream, perhaps."

"A bad dream," she repeated; "yes, that's it—a bad dream. And only a dream, thank God!"

"But I've wakened you," she continued contritely, "and of course you are tired, too. I'm so sorry. Please go to sleep again, and I will try not to disturb you. I am all right indeed."

I put out the light and got back into my berth and lay there thinking about my companion and more than half expecting her to cry out again. Evidently she did not at once go to sleep, for I heard her sigh softly now and then, and once she whispered brokenly: "Only a dream, thank God, only a dream!"

CHAPTER II.

WHEN I wakened the next morning I was alone, and should have been inclined to believe the preceding night a dream were it not for the penciled words on a scrap of paper pinned to my counterpane, that thanked me for sharing my room and expressed the hope that we might meet again in the future.

It was raining when we landed, and upon reaching our hotel, after two hours' run by train and a half-hour spent in crossing troubled waters in an odious little steamer, we were not in a condition to be enthusiastic about our new quarters.

Elizabeth's booklet had said:

"This well-appointed house combines the comforts of home with the conveniences of the best hotels. The cozy bedrooms, spacious verandas, abundant, carefully prepared food, and cheerful, willing service appeal at once to the jaded traveler, offering all essential bodily comforts and refreshment; while nature's never ending panorama stretching away into space affords vistas pleasing to the eye, and the society of other cultured guests provides the mental stimulus so necessary for true recreation."

Even now, however, I hesitate to recall our first week in this ideal retreat, when it rained without ceasing and the beauties of nature were left to the imagination, while the house itself proved a delusion and a snare.

Elizabeth got along best, for she immediately inspected her wardrobe and ripped up two skirts and a shirtwaist preparatory to making them over with circles of lace insertion let in by hand; her ardor was a little dampened when she discovered she had no lace and nowhere to buy it, but she rallied bravely and resorted to fagoting instead, with satisfactory results.

Gabrielle and I were not so fortunate, for experience had taught us not to attempt to improve on our raiment, and after we had written to everybody we knew and told them what a delightful summer we anticipated, we had reached the end of our resources, and I only stared absently out of the window, while Gabrielle took to reviewing her past life, which is proof positive that she is very blue indeed.

"What use have I been in the world?" she demanded, lying face downward on her bed. "I do nothing but eat and sleep and enjoy myself, year after year."

"You are lots of use to me," interrupted Elizabeth, cheerfully. "Would you cut these sleeves elbow length?"

"No, I wouldn't; I don't like them."

"Well, I do;" and Elizabeth clashed her scissors vigorously (elbow sleeves being a point upon which they differed emphatically), while Gabrielle pulled a pillow under her head and continued solemnly:

"I have quite decided that next winter shall be different. When we go back to Washington I intend to read something improving every day, and to spend the money I generally waste on theaters in flowers for the Children's Hospital; and I will read to the blind, and take them up and down to the Congressional Library to those entertainments, you know."

We exchanged smiles over her unconscious head, for the blind had often before been promised the pleasure of her society without reaping any actual benefit therefrom, and reference to them always indicated that her spirits had reached the zero point.

"Let us go out," I suggested, feel that something must be done to a diversion, "even if we get wet, be better than staying here."

So we donned our rain-coats and walked thru the little village, with its modest frame dwellings and occasional pretentious hotel, up a hill and straight

IN THIS issue Ledger readers will find a capital story, entitled, "THE SMUGGLER; or, WE THREE GIRLS." It tells of the thrilling and peculiar things that befell three American girls on a vacation up the coast near the Canadian line. It's a pippin. Read it. Look out next week for another zipping railroad story by Alvah Milton Kerr, entitled, "FRECKLE HOGAN'S GRIT." If your circulation is poor this story will warm it up. Boys, keep your eyes open for a new story for kids, called, "NED CASTLEMAN'S NERVE; or, A MILLION AT STAKE," by Captain Jack Judson. It is a humdinger. Wait for it.

out on a bluff overlooking the sea. There, isolated and alone, was a vacant cottage with a covered veranda.

I shall never forget our first sight of the ocean—all gray like the enveloping fog, except where the white-crested waves rolled highest, with wonderful green shadows and opalescent lights. As we looked, the mist lifted, the sun came out, and we saw the vast Atlantic stretching sparkling away into space, restless, awesome, and irresistibly alluring, with its vague suggestion of hidden marvels just beyond the horizon.

Elizabeth beckoned from the turn of the veranda, which ran quite about the house, and we joined her, speechless with admiration. Evidently the island ended here in a sharp point, for while on one hand was the ocean, on the other was water also, but closely dotted with little green islands, gay with flowers and comfortable-looking houses. Just beyond was the strip of land we knew to be the border of the United States.

High above, upon the bluff, stood the little cottage, commanding an unobstructed view on every side. There was an air of coziness about it, deserted tho it was, which made us homesick in spite of ourselves. It was built of shingle, now beautifully gray and weather-beaten, and had fascinating latticed windows and overhanging gables, with an outside chimney of rough stone. Anything more unlike the clapboard houses of the village could not be imagined.

"How I would like to get inside!" exclaimed Elizabeth, longingly.

"There ain't no reason you can't," said a gruff voice behind us. I almost lost my balance, but turned to meet the intruder.

He seemed entirely harmless, merely an old man with a door-key, who explained that he was the caretaker and came up after each rain to be sure everything was all right; so we followed him eagerly.

If the outside of the cottage was attractive, the inside was irresistible. It consisted of a moderately large living-room with a stone fireplace, a small dining-room, a smaller kitchen, three bedrooms, a bath, and a little square entrance hall.

It was furnished, too. As Gabrielle said, modestly, it could not have been done better had we attended to it ourselves. There were large, comfortable wicker chairs and couches, upholstered in chintz, chintz hangings, delightful little tables, and, last, but not least, a generous supply of the necessaries of life in the shape of bed and table linen, cooking utensils, table appointments of china and plated ware, and, in short, everything one could desire.

"Oh!" exclaimed Elizabeth, after exhausting her supply of adjectives, "how I should like to spend the summer right here!"

"Well," returned the caretaker, "the house is to let."

It was the beginning of the end. We all knew it privately, altho we did no more than casually ascertain the rent; but Elizabeth conversed aside with the old man, while Gabrielle tried each chair in turn, and I discovered a light arranged over the couch where one might lie and read luxuriously on stormy evenings.

"Of course," said Gabrielle, as we turned reluctantly away, "it is out of the question for us to take it."

"Of course," we echoed; but Elizabeth added that the rent was ridiculously low, and I referred to the view from the window and the utter absence of vines or any sort of verdure, so necessary to combatting hay fever.

We wanted to go back along the shore as far as possible, so descended a very steep little flight of steps leading down to a small shed or boat-house, belonging to the cottage.

A woman stood on the little slip, looking out over the water. She turned as we approached, and I recognized Mrs. Graham. The keen air had brought a little color into her face, but her lips looked blue and pinched, and her voice, as she responded to my surprised greeting, shook uncontrollably.

"I am waiting for my husband," she said. "He went out early this morning in his boat, and has not yet returned. Our cottage is just beyond the bluff, but I had no idea we were your neighbors."

I explained that we were at the hotel, and expressed the hope that she felt rested after her journey, but she had resumed her scrutiny of the ocean and did not reply to my inquiry.

"He was to have been home by noon," she said, "and I have been standing here two hours. Sailboats are treacherous, and Harry is so reckless. Ah!"

The ejaculation was one of relief, as a white sail appeared and headed for the slip.

"I'm coming to see you," I called, as we walked on, but the conclusion was forced upon me that she had forgotten my existence.

"Why do you suppose they use that forlorn little slip," I inquired, "when there are plenty of good landing-places further on?"

But the subject did not seem to interest Elizabeth, whom I had addressed, for she merely remarked with a sigh:

"I just hate to go back to that old hotel."

"But of course we could never rent the cottage," said Gabrielle, the prudent.

"Oh, of course not!" we agreed, and ascended the steps of the hotel in gloomy silence.

In the hall there were mountains of trunks, covered with a bewildering quantity of labels, and a subdued air of excitement prevailed, indicating that the new arrivals were worthy of consideration. As soon as possible, we investigated the register, and found that Lord Wilfrid and Lady Edith Campbell, of London, England, were enjoying the hospitality of the house.

It was no use pretending that we were not impressed, for we were, and we read the names over several times aloud to see how they sounded. It was our first encounter with British aristocracy outside of books, and we hurried upstairs to make fresh toilets in their honor.

They did not appear until we had nearly finished dinner, and we were so interested watching for them that we forgot to complain about the food.

Lord Wilfrid was disappointing, altho he had the drooping blond mustache and bored manner we were familiar with on the stage. I say this frankly because we learned later than we had been unjust and that his unprepossessing appearance was simply the result of unrequited affection, which, of course, went very hard with one who was accustomed to having the world at his feet—especially the feminine world.

TED HAMILTON—16.

The vast Atlantic sparkling into space.

Lady Edith told us all about it after we got to know her very well, and explained that they had come to this quiet retreat, where they were sure to meet no one, to allow her brother to regain his usual poise before visiting their uncle, the Governor General of Canada. She added that the length of their stay depended upon the benefit he derived from it, and hoped we would do what we could toward diverting him. We said we would.

Of course all this happened quite naturally as time went on, and I only mention it here to show how wrong it is to judge by appearances, for we thought Lord Wilfrid looked ill-natured and grumpy, whereas he was really suffering from a broken heart.

His sister, however, was all that could be desired, and suggested Lady Clara Vere de Vere in a very satisfactory manner. In fact, I heard Gabrielle murmur: "'The daughter of a hundred earls,'" as Lady Edith swept thru the doorway, and Elizabeth quoted: "'The languid light of her proud eyes,'" when she inspected the somewhat dingy menu.

I don't think I said anything, for I was so absorbed in wondering whether the ripples of her golden hair were natural or acquired that I forgot everything else; but when we met her the next day and felt the charm of her personality I was ready to swear that everything about her was genuine.

So absorbed were we that evening in discussing the brother and sister that we almost forgot the cottage; but I saw Elizabeth busily engaged with pencil and paper as we were preparing for bed, and was not altogether surprised to hear her voice from the next room after the lights were out.

"If we got a competent woman who would do our washing," she remarked, "it would not be much more expensive than staying here. I have calculated everything."

"But we could never find such a woman," Gabrielle said, interested but incredulous.

"The old man said his sister would come," returned Elizabeth. "Of course I did not engage her, but I know where to find her."

The next day we rented the cottage, engaged the competent woman, and notified the clerk at the hotel that our rooms would be at his disposal at the end of the week.

Next week's Ledger will contain further chapters of this interesting story. You will miss a great treat if you do not read it to the end. We will give you constantly the very best stories of entertainment that money will buy, so send in your subscription and take the Ledger regularly, if you are not doing so. You will not regret it.

* * *

Pharaohs' Dressmakers.

The high waistline in women's clothes, the fashion for the season of 1916, was fairly popular in Egypt about the year 2500 B. C., a time when slight mustaches were the rage among the young men, according to researches made by Miss B. M. Cartlandt of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, says the New York Times. She discovered that cosmetics were much used by the woman favorites of the Pharaohs, and also found that the men were not averse to toning up their complexions when courts were held along the Nile of the Middle Kingdoms.

In the monthly Bulletin of the museum, just issued, Miss Cartlandt has described the clothes of fashionable society of the Egypt of long ago. Her descriptions were taken from exhibits in the museum. Depicting the costumes of the Old Kingdom, 2980-2475 B. C., she says:

"The conventional sheathlike garment worn by all women was of plain unpleated stuff, that hung from the breast to the ankles, so scant that it clung to the figure and clearly showed the form, fastened by straps over one or both shoulders or merely held up by a belt. It was often pure white, but sometimes it had narrow selvage around the top, a fringe on the bottom, and braces that were parti-colored. In the tomb of Ptahhetey at Sakkara there is a scene of offering bearers representing estates, where the dresses are alternately red and dark green. These women, according to custom, were adorned with necklaces, bracelets and anklets of blue and green beads.

"Aside from white, green seems to have been the color most worn, altho we do find in reliefs red and yellow dresses as well. The fashions for women were simpler and less varied than those for men, with slight deviations from the conventional attire, such as a short skirt worn at times by servants. The attire of dancing girls varied from the regular long costume to a short skirt, or in a later period to a girdle of brightly colored beads.

"Most women wore wigs or dressed their own hair long. It fell to the shoulders or to the waist in the back in a large mass, with a side lock hanging on either side of the face. Sometimes a colored ribbon was tied around the brow like a fillet, and often a circlet of real flowers was worn.

"We know that cosmetics and ointments were used by both men and women, and in this connection it is interesting to note a statuette in the first Egyptian room, the eyes of which are outlined with a green band. Green malachite was used for this, whether purely for adornment or for medicinal reasons we do not know; and rouge and black paint were also employed as part of the 'makeup.'

"Dress in ancient Egypt, as in every civilized country, shows diversity according to the class or occupation of the individual and variety dependent upon the fashion of the day. The King and his courtiers set the styles, which were soon assumed by subordinate officials until they forced their superiors to adopt new modes. The fluctuations of fashion would be difficult to follow, altho there was a steady tendency to elaboration and luxury; but let us consider the most distinct changes in the Old Kingdom (2980-2475 B. C.), the Middle Kingdom (2160-1788 B. C.), and the Empire (1580-945 B. C.), as shown in our Egyptian galleries.

"In the tomb of Perneb we have costumes which are typical of the Old Kingdom. Humble people were satisfied with a belt tied around the waist with the ends hanging down in front, a skirt of linen, fastened loosely around the loins, or rarely they contrived a skirt that may have been made out of rush matting. Even these, at times, were laid aside, and the men appeared nude when engaged in strenuous exercise. The offering bearers in the tomb chamber wore the short white skirt, the most common article of clothing. It was a straight piece of white linen cloth wrapped about her hips like a kilt, the ends being [illegible] in front or being passed under a girdle and sticking up above the waistline.

"Men in the Old Kingdom almost invariably clipped their hair close and shaved their faces, altho up to the fifth dynasty they sometimes wore slight mustaches, but shepherds occasionally allowed their hair to grow, a custom generally considered unclean. The upper classes wore wigs of two kinds—either short and close fitting, with tight little curls in horizontal rows, or long and bushy, parted in the middle and falling well over the shoulders. Such wigs were probably made of sheep's wool, and actual specimens have been found. When a man wished to assume his full dignity, he attached a false beard of pleated hair to his chin by means of straps. Sandals, which were made of reeds or leather with a strap over the instep, connected with another strap which passed between the toes, were worn irrespective of class, except in the presence of superiors, but the Egyptian commonly preferred to go barefoot.

"By the time of the Middle Kingdom ordinary individuals had adopted the pleated kilt, which for a time, at least in the Old Kingdom, had been the peculiar property of the King; however, it is doubtful if the people ever wore it of gold. On a wooden statuette of Seostris I., in the Eighth Egyptian room, this kilt is represented as pleated all around, the two ends curving symmetrically in front up to the girdle. The King also wears the red crown symbolic of lower Egypt, while the mate to this statuette, which is now in the Cairo museum, wears the white crown of upper Egypt.

"Other statuettes in the Sixth Egyptian room show what a variety of skirts existed at the time. The old forms continued, altho there was a tendency toward a narrower, longer skirt. The triangular projection, so fashionable in the first dynasty, became subdued until it was quite modest. The long skirt which has been described as typical of this time often had a high waistline. It was at this time that clothing for the upper part of the body first appeared, and a curious cape was sometimes pinned around the shoulders. A heavy cloak or shawl, probably of wool, worn in the Old Kingdom as an outer garment by both men and women, now became common.

"Changes in the costumes of women from the Old to the Middle Kingdom were slight, but there were a few innovations that showed the tendency toward elaboration. A plain white tunic was sometimes covered with network of brightly colored beads in diamond pattern with a bead fringe at the bottom. A similar dress, exceptionally gay in color, dates from the sixth dynasty. One statuette from Assiut shows a white tunic with a wide border on the bottom representing birds' wings or a leaf pattern, the latter more likely, since it is painted in green."

The Quadroon's Hate

-:- Or, -:-

One Man's Folly.

By Ella Martin

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Begun in No. 43, October 21. Subscriptions can begin with that issue or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE NEW MASTER.

THE master was away when Nepha arrived at Charlston Hall with the boy in her arms. She went straight to Aunt Anna's rooms and asked for an audience. Aunt Anna, as she was called by nearly everybody in the neighborhood, was a slender woman, with white hair and soft gray eyes. She was past 70 now, and moved with a slow, feeble step. She had had her share of worry and sorrow. First her brother, and then her nephew, had given rise to scandals that even her ability for hiding things could not cover up. But she had remained at the Hall ever since the death of her sister-in-law, when Lloyd was a small boy, and was ever faithful to her duties.

"Why, Nepha," she exclaimed, as the quadroon entered, "whose child have you there?"

Nepha placed the little one in a chair. "This boy, Aunt Anna," she said impressively, "is the future master here; he is the child of my sister and Lloyd Charlston."

Miss Charlston's hands went up in surprise and unbelief. "I know my nephew has been wild, Nepha; but don't expect me to believe that. Surely, he——"

"Would not mate with one with the negro strain, you would say," the quadroon interrupted, as the old lady hesitated. "But he is this child's father, nevertheless. Look in his face and judge for yourself."

She turned the baby's face toward her aunt, and watched the look of conviction settle over the elder woman's countenance.

"It must not be!" cried the mistress. "You must not say such things, Nepha! Do you want to bring open disgrace upon the family name? How can you malign your own sister and flaunt her disgrace in the eyes of the world?"

The color rose to Nepha's face as she faced the aged woman. "You do not understand. I know you, Aunt Anna, and your pride, but I also know your sense of justice. And when you have heard my story, and its truth is proved to you, you will be the first one to proclaim this child the heir to Charlston Hall. But wait and consider a moment. You have done much for me—more, perhaps, than another would have done. But was it full justice, or was it shielding the wicked, or rather the name of the dead? You are as much my aunt as Lloyd's; and tho my father acknowledged to you my parentage, you have hidden the truth in your breast, for pride's sake, and permitted the world to look upon me as a servant, the child of a freed slave, whom you had made your protege."

"Which is the best I could do for you, my dear; for you are not legally my brother's child. That is, you were born out of wedlock, and could not inherit his name or wealth. My property, which is considerable, is willed to you; therefore, you and Lloyd will eventually share your grandfather's wealth, half of which was mine."

"You have done well, Aunt Anna, but not full justice, or my parentage would be known. And what is the result of your secrecy? I hate my dead father for the wrong he did me by bringing me into the world with the strain of African blood to hamper me thru life. And I hate my arrogant half-brother, who has persecuted me because of it ever since I was big enough to understand his taunts. Oh, I hope some day to see him humbled —humbled, until he will hate his life as I hate mine!"

Miss Charlston put her hands over her face, shuddering. To her the wish seemed prophetic. The wish, indeed, might come true if she were to do full justice. But she was too near life's inevitable end to enter into a struggle such as must follow if she did as Nepha suggested.

"What course are you going to pursue, aunt?" Nepha went on relentlessly. "Is this child going to be wronged out of his name and inheritance for the sake of the Charlston pride? Or will you help me repair the injury already done him by placing him in the station to which he was born?"

"But, Nepha, don't you understand that the law will not give him the rights he is morally entitled to, if he is, in truth, Lloyd's son?"

"It is you who do not understand, Aunt Anna. Lloyd Charlston was legally married to my sister, and this is their offspring. I can prove the truth of what I say."

"It can't be true!" cried the old lady, agitatedly. "Lloyd was married only the other night. His bride, as you know, was obliged to return immediately to her sister's bedside."

"Yes, and he committed bigamy by marrying Lois Hastings. Either he does justice by my sister and her child, or he goes to prison. I have him in my power at last!"

The old lady was silent for a long time. At last she spoke: "It must be as you say," she acquiesced. "He cannot be brought up in the same way that you were, for he is rightful heir here. I remember now, that my nephew spent one whole summer in St. Augustine; but he returned alone, and I did not mistrust anything wrong."

"He deserted Lygia, like the reprobate he is, and made her believe the marriage was a sham. She came to me and I found shelter for her at a friend's. I believed Lloyd was deceiving her about the marriage, and searched his desk for the certificate. I waited long for the opportunity, for he carried the keys about with him. But at last my chance came. He forgot and left the key in the lock."

She drew the certificate from her bosom. Miss Charlston examined it, but was silent.

"And now justice shall be done!" cried Nepha. "Are you with me, or against me, Aunt Anna? Must I fight the battle alone?"

But tho of a kindly nature, the old lady was not prepared to acknowledge the child of a quadroon as the heir to Charlston publicly. She did not believe that Lloyd would permit the presence of this child in his ancestral home. She knew his passionate nature, his quick temper and his disregard for everything except his own will and pleasure.

"I will speak to Lloyd, Nepha," she said, at last. "But I have no power to control or compel him. And I ask, as a favor to me, that you avoid publicity in this matter until I am laid under the sod, which will not be long. I am sick to the soul of this strife—this rebutting against the will of first the father and then the son. I have done nothing all my life but cover up the things that would create scandals. I think, now that you are grown, I will betake myself and my belongings elsewhere. I would like a few years of peace on this earth before I am called hence."

"Pray, what better off am I, now that I have come to maturity?" cried the quadroon. "Where do I belong? Neither in the servants' quarters—you have trained me to be above that—nor in the homes of your associates as their equals, for my features betray my lowly origin."

"You must do as you see fit in this matter, Nepha, but do not expect support from me. I will remain here and appoint you overseer, and the servants will obey you. Then you can work out things to suit your own sense of justice. I am worn out and not strong enough to wrestle with my nephew to keep him where he belongs. I gave that up long ago, because I found that it availed nothing. You may try your hand at it; I give you carte blanche. Only, Nepha, for my sake, do not create a scandal. Everything must be sub rosa while I live, if you love me. I cannot bear disgrace."

"Ah, that is your weakness, dear aunt; you are afraid of public opinion. A fig for what folks will think, for what people will say! Most of them have skeletons in their own closets that rattle their bones rather more loudly than desired. But I will conduct everything to suit your wishes. No one need know that Lygia is my sister or that she is not entirely white. Neither she nor little Lloyd shows the strain of African blood. It was I whom Nature chose to mark so that all might recognize my origin. But the child is tired!" She took the little one in her arms and turned toward the door. "I will rig up a nursery in the east wing for him. If you will appoint Rosalie as nurse she will not neglect him."

Miss Charlston summoned the servants and placed Nepha in charge of them, on account of her growing infirmity, she explained. And each one knew that disobedience was equivalent to a dismissal. They had belonged to Charlston so long that any other place would not seem like home to them.

"You may come with me, Rosalie," Nepha said, "and bring the child along. He must be bathed and fed and put to sleep, as he is tired out."

Rosalie, a young mulatto, did as she was bidden. Master Lloyd fretted some until he was made comfortable. Then he was left asleep on a couch while the two fitted up a room as a nursery. It was a large, airy apartment, overlooking the orchard.

After instructing Rosalie concerning the baby's care, Nepha left the room. But she was not idle. There was work for her to do, if she was to carry her project thru. She went at once to the stables and saddled the horse that belonged to her and rode to Negro Jim's. She was welcomed with enthusiasm; for none of the inmates of the house in the wood had seen her since she had taken Lygia to the hospital.

"Ah, honey," Chloe cried, "I shor' done tink yo' had deserted dis yer fambly."

"You don't know me, Chloe, if you thought that. I shall never forget you and Jim. I love my friends and hate my enemies!"

"Dat dar ain't de way de Good Book says we orter do, chile. Yo' know dat. Dat am de debil's own way, to hate anybody. Yo'-all doan want to do nothin' to please de debil, now does yo'?"

"I please myself, Chloe. If it pleases his Satanic Majesty it is not my fault."

"Well, den, thank de Lawd dat we is yo' friends 'stead ob yo' enemies," Chloe laughed.

"Amen to that," Nepha answered goodnaturedly. "I need such friends as you. I have come for a few of my things; but I want to retain my room indefinitely." She pressed a bill into the negress' hand. "For my rent for another year," she explained.

"We doan hab to hab no rent, honey," put in Negro Jim, who had been an interested but silent listener. "We doan neber use dat room nohow, anyway."

"Jim, you are a jewel," Nepha laughed; and ignoring Chloe's efforts to return the bill, she ran up to her room. After closing the door she unlocked a small drawer of the bureau and took from it a package containing the dress shirt, with its telltale spot of blood. She added the marriage certificate and a document in her own handwriting, and sealed the package. Then, taking it with her, she left the house in the wood and rode straight to town, where her sister was a patient in the one small hospital the place afforded. It had not been necessary to take Lygia to the city, where Cecil Lynd was now under treatment. A few weeks' rest, and the right kind of care would be all that her sister would need, the physician had told Nepha.

Before going to the hospital the quadroon called at the bank and rented a safety deposit box, in which she placed the package containing the evidence of crime against the owner of Charlston Hall.

"There," she muttered, when once more upon the street, "rest there, thou Sword of Damocles! Things will come my way soon, my dear brother. Oh, it is worth living for—this chance of worsting a villain! He laughs best who laughs last!"

She placed her horse in a livery stable for the night, and walked to the hospital. Granton was a small town, four miles from Charleston Hall, and it was not difficult for Nepha to find the hospital. A nurse led her to her sister's room and then withdrew. Lygia lay among the pillows looking very wan and listless. She smiled faintly as Nepha bent over her.

"Ah, Nepha, what will become of my boy when I am gone?" she wailed.

"Stop that instantly!" Nepha commanded. "Stop pitying yourself! You aren't going any place that isn't on the map. You have work to do on earth for a while yet; and self-pity takes the strength and spirits out of one. If you die, no knowing what will become of your boy. If you brace up and help me, our combined efforts can place him where he belongs. I have proofs that with your help will establish his claim as heir to Charlston Hall.

"There is nothing the matter with you but your mind. I feel like shaking you, Lygia! If you had not been so docile all along you would now be reigning at Charlston yourself. Why did you permit him to desert you?"

"Oh, Nepha," gasped Lygia, "I wish I were more like you! But I will rouse myself and try to help you for baby's sake."

"Ah, that is more like it! Now you are showing a little spirit!" And the quadroon patted the thin white hand that lay on the counterpane. "You will get well quickly by exercising a little will-power," she added. "It is your grief and discouragement that have made you ill. Your love for your husband is dead. Why moan around over a lost illusion?

"Oh, Lygia! You do not know what real living is! You have merely existed. It is living to strive, to fight even Fate itself. And in no other way will you gain the position to which you rightfully belong—that of Lloyd Charlston's wife and mistress of the Hall."

"But, Nepha, I do not belong there. You were born into the Charlston family, tho illegitimately; and morally you are joint heir with Lloyd to the Charlston wealth. I am only Lloyd's dupe."

"You are his wife, Lygia! Wife of the one legal heir, raised thru your marriage to him to a position equal to his own, as I can prove. You can assume that position in spite of him. I cannot, being only a Charlston out of wedlock, make any claim whatever, but must take the favors which are vouchsafed me thru the generosity of the reigning mistress.

"Come, Lygia, are you going to be brave and help me right your wrongs? Or must I take my revenge on Lloyd Charlston in another way?"

"I will do as you say, Nepha. You must not wreck vengeance on my child's father."

"It is well," said the quadroon. "One week from today I will come for you. Be ready to go to the Hall and establish your claim. Now, dear, don't spend the interval shivering with dread. Brace up and cultivate a determination to dare all and win."

She kissed the white face of her half-sister and departed. She returned to Charlston as she had come—on horseback. On her way thru the lane, which led from the highway across the fields to Charlston, she met Electra, who had been to the Hall in search of her.

"I's done glad to fin' you'-all, Miss Nepha," exclaimed the mulatto, as the other drew up her horse. "Miss Lois say will yo' come to Hastin' Place? She hab somethin' she got to say to yo'-all."

"It is getting late, and I ought to be home this very minute, Electra, but I suppose it is important, and I will go."

Leaving the horse in the lane, the two girls hastened down the graveled road that led to the home of the Hastings. Electra conducted the quadroon to Lois' room and withdrew. The latter came forward with extended hand.

"How glad I am to see you!" she cried. "Your timely assistance is most heartily appreciated by my parents, as well as myself, tho none of us have had a chance to thank you. I sent for you to ask another favor. You are so capable—and on your help depends my sister's life!"

CHAPTER XIV.

LOIS' INTERVIEW WITH NEPHA.

"I AM willing to do what I can, Miss Hastings," replied the quadroon. "Tell me how I can serve you."

"You know what happened at the Crossroads that night. Tell me if Cecil Lynd is alive, and if so, where he can be found. You share my suspicions as to who is guilty of that crime; therefore, I ask your help. If you do not know, I believe you can find out for me. You are so capable, so unafraid."

Nepha hesitated a moment then said: "I know no more about what happened than you, who saw the telltale spot of blood on——"

"Yes, yes!" interrupted Lois, shuddering. "But is he dead—Cecil, I mean? Oh, tell me all you know! I must learn something about my sister's lover. My father is searching diligently, but as yet has learned nothing. You can tell me, I believe, if he is dead—or alive."

"I——"

"Come!" cried Lois, seeing the girl hesitate, and knowing that she could enlighten her if she would. "Come with me and see my sister's plight! You will not refuse to answer after that!"

Wonderingly Nepha followed the girl whom she had rescued from Charlston's clutches, first up a board flight of stairs, then down a long corridor to Ila Hastings' chamber. On the very bed where the bridal robes had lain that eventful night was the girl who had fled from her coming nuptials straight to the horror that awaited her at the Crossroads. She lay there wan and listless, but now the light of consciousness shone in her blue eyes. She gazed at the quadroon inquiringly, but did not speak.

"See," whispered Lois, "what her experience has brought her to! The horror of what she saw has never left her for a moment. The fever has sapped her vitality till her very life depends upon rousing her. She believes that Cecil is dead. Oh, if you know anything to the contrary, tell us about it and our everlasting gratitude will be yours!"

Ila caught the drift of the conversation and turned her white face toward the quadroon.

"Do you know if Cecil is dead?" she asked quite calmly. She had raved over his fate in her delirium; but now she took everything quietly, and refused to show any interest in life. But for an instant she became more alert, and added eagerly, "If you know anything about him, tell us quickly!"

Without stopping to think that if she spoke at all she must tell more, Nepha replied: "No, he is not dead—rest assured of that."

Ila struggled to her elbow, her shining hair, which had become unbraided, streaming over her shoulders. She looked ethereal in her loveliness.

"Oh," she gasped, "are you sure? Where is he? What has become of him?" She fell back then upon the pillow, exhausted. Her white hands clasped together imploringly, but she said no more, and her eyes closed from sheer weakness.

"I cannot say where he is," Nepha answered. "He was taken away after it happened. But he lives, and he will come to you some day."

Ila raised and grasped the quadroon's hand. "Find him—oh, find him for me, and I will bless you all my life! This suspense is killing me!"

Lois sprang to the bedside and placed the excited girl back upon the pillow. Ila had fainted. Lois turned to Nepha. "You see," she cried excitedly, "it is as I told you! Promise me, for my sister's sake, that you will find him! She will never be able to realize that he is alive unless she sees him. Bring him to her, and anything in our power to grant shall be yours."

"It is a bargain," cried the quadroon exultingly. "I will find him and send him to her; but you must pay the price. You know what happened that night. His life was attempted—he was stabbed in the dark—by whom you can guess, as well as I. You can help me to prove who did the dastardly deed, and I shall call upon you to keep your promise. Do you swear that you will not fail me?"

"I swear it," Lois answered, solemnly; "only save my sister's life."

Without a word Nepha, the quadroon, turned away, while Lois rang for the nurse to help resuscitate Ila from her swoon. Swiftly as a fawn Nepha ran down the broad steps. In the hall she met Electra, Ila's maid. She caught the girl by the arm.

"Come with me," she said; "I have something to say to you." Wonderingly the mulatto girl followed her. At the foot of the first terrace a graveled path led to a summerhouse, covered with ivyvine. Into its seclusion Nepha drew the mulatto. "Sit down," she said.

"I was on my way to my mistress," said Electra, hesitating.

"Your mistress can get along better without you."

Electra bridled up. "I done know more 'bout dat den yo' do," she said, resentfully.

"I will explain," replied the quadroon. "But for you Miss Hastings would not be in her present condition. You trusted Sam too far and betrayed your mistress' secret to him. You have education enough to read, and you read the note intrusted to you. Then you told Sam all about it."

"How yo'-all know dat?" Electra was open-mouthed with astonishment.

"Sam was a spy, sent to question you. He betrayed your confidence to his master, and laughed about your being in love with him. He made love to you just to wheedle from you the information he sought in the interest of another. That other is an enemy of Cecil Lynd. He met him at the Crossroads that night, and—well, as you know, Mr. Lynd has not been seen since."

Electra was dumb with amazement for a space. Then her temper flared up. She rose to her feet. "I will kill dat nigger, shor' as preachin'!" she exclaimed. "I doan want no lober laik him! He am a traitor!"

"I thought you wouldn't."

"I shor' will kill dat nigger!"

"He deserves it, Electra, but it won't do. I will tell you a better way to punish him. Let him think you have grown tired of him. Hint of another sweetheart who has cut him out. I will furnish the sweetheart. Mose, who lives in the wood, asked me about you. He thinks you are pretty. And I told him you were a girl worth knowing. Shall I help you get acquainted?"

"'Deed yo' may, Miss Nepha, if only to spite Sam. I done seen Mose. His face am laughing all de time. I 'spects he war born dat way."

"Yes, Mose has a smiling countenance, and tho his skin is a shiny black, his heart is white. Now I will tell you how you can get acquainted with Mose and spite Sam. I will send you to Negro Jim's on an errand every once in a while. Mose won't let you come home alone, probably. Do you know the way to the house in the wood?"

"I neber ben thar, Miss Nepha; but I know whar de road turns off."

"And do you think you can be trusted to take a note to Chloe and not tell Sam about it?"

"I 'clare to goodness, Miss Nepha, I done hates dat nigger! Didn't yo'all say he laffed 'cause I war in lub with him. I'll pay him off yit!"

"That is the kind of pride to have, Electra. Throw him over and get a lover you can trust."

"I doan know as I'll laik Mose laik I did Sam 'fore he bragged 'bout makin' a fool ob me; but I'll pretend to."

"Oh, you can't help liking Mose; he's as good as he is pleasant." Nepha rose from her seat and conducted the girl from the summerhouse. "I'll tell you what we'll do, Electra. We'll hang together. Sam has served you a mean trick, and it has been the means of bringing trouble to the Hastings. And Sam's master has been a torment to me all my life. We will work together for their undoing. Sam is not good enough for you, anyway. See here, can't you make a fool of him as he did of you, and find out of him everything you can about Lloyd Charlston, and report to me as he reported to his master?"

"I will do that, Miss Nepha. I will make a fool ob dat nigger yit."

"Meanwhile, you can get acquainted with Mose, and then throw Sam over when you have picked all we want to know out of him. Just at present his master is in hiding. I want to learn where he is. Don't let Sam find out that you even know of the house in the woods, till we are ready to show our hand."

The two women went up the steps to the house, and Electra waited on the portico while Nepha went inside. Mrs. Hastings was coming downstairs from a visit to her daughter's room. She looked years older than on that wedding night when she had been instrumental in changing the brides, in an effort to win happiness for both her daughters. But she was still gracious and dignified.

"I have promised your daughters that I will try to find what has become of Cecil Lynd. I think I can do so in time. May I write a note and send it by Electra to some friends of mine?"

"Certainly," Mrs. Hastings replied. "Just step into the library. You will find writing materials there. Electra is at your service at any time. If you have any idea where Mr. Lynd can be found, I will be very glad to accept your aid."

Mrs. Hatings sighed as she spoke. She felt the greatest concern over Ila's condition, and she knew that a shadow had also fallen over Lois' life—one that could not be entirely lifted in all the years to come.

The front door opened suddenly and Mr. Hastings came into the hall. He was looking worn out and discouraged. "It is no use," he said, in reply to her eager questioning. "I have had a detective searching high and low for Cecil Lynd, but so far, not the slightest clew has been found, either of him or his car. I have heard no more of Avon Walters, either, and he was as anxious as I to find out what had become of Cecil."

"Perhaps Avon has found him and they are together. Nepha Charlston is going to help us; she believes she can find him."

Mr. Hastings stopped short on the stairs and looked at his wife hopefully. "Nepha!" he echoed. "Ah, Clarice, I believe that girl could come nearer solving the mystery than any one else, if she only would. She is the sort that is always on the alert, and never lets anything escape her. She knows Charlston's secrets. But for her I dare not think how Lois would have fared at his hands. No wonder he has left home. He fears he will have to reckon with me, and but for the scandal it would create, he would, too."

Nepha disappeared in the doorway, the folded note in her hand. The eyes of husband and wife turned in her direction. They both knew she had overheard part of their conversation, and were silent. The quadroon smiled.

"I know everything," she said, "more, even, than you suspect, concerning the villainy of Lloyd Charlston. If I find him for you, will you promise to punish him? He is my enemy; that is the reason I ask it."

"Aye, I swear it!" answered Ila's father.

"It is agreed," said the quadroon, quietly, and she glided out of the house like a flitting shadow.

This strange story leads to very extraordinary situations and dramatic episodes. The reader will find it eminently worth reading to the end. Next week's Ledger will contain further chapters of it. The surest way to get the Ledger is to subscribe for it and have it come to your home regularly. Today is a good time to attend to this.

* * *

FASCINATING RUTH.

"It's funny what ideas one gets!" mused the bookkeeper, aloud.

"Everything's funny if you look at it the right way," declared the little stenographer, philosophically, as she brushed and sponged at several dozen dull brown spots on her suit. "I suppose the people in the automobile that did this thought it was a huge joke to see the mud fly up! I'd think it was funny, too, if you'd got it!"

The bookkeeper listened without hearing.

"You see," he said, "up there at that summer resort we all were dead in love with that little old woman. Why, she was a perfect peach! She had white hair, and it was just as soft and pretty as old women's hair should be, and she dressed in simple dresses, with little white things around her neck and wrists—so quaint and old-fashioned but so perfectly becoming!

"And her voice! Always so welcome and pleasant, and sounded as tho you were the one person in all the world that she was eagerly waiting to see!"

"Um! She must have known the game right when she was young," commented the little stenographer.

"Well, she certainly had us all, as I said! We'd have done anything for her, from reading aloud to her for hours to taking her rowing for pond [illegible] when the fish were aching to be caught, and tennis was in full swing, even. She was a sport, too. She didn't object to entering into the fun and doing things—and she was the best one on the floor when it came to a Virginia reel.

"So when it leaked out that she had a daughter, all the fellows were particularly inquisitive. When the little old mother, at her age, was such a peach, we all knew what to expect in her daughter. She just couldn't help bringing up a marvel!

"We hated to ask outright what sort of girl she was, but we all put out bait at every opportunity and then compared notes. Actually, there was betting as to who should be the lucky man and feeling ran high when it came to deciding who should make the first call, for it wasn't in reason for all of us to pile in at once!

"The little old mother wasn't a bit averse to speaking of her daughter, and she always spoke of her so softly—with such a happy light in her eyes! It surely was encouraging! Her daughter's name was Ruth, and somehow the name seemed fitting and appropriate!

"Everything seemed just right! Ruth was taller than her mother, we knew. She was dark, with brown eyes. She loved a good time and was a general favorite. She was somewhat artistic, and had had a good deal of success with her paintings, but she wasn't at all conceited or spoiled.

"Oh, I don't know exactly why, but the picture grew more entrancing every day!

"I know I was counting up my salary and trying to see whether with careful stretching it could be made to support two. I did my best to find out the circumstances of the little old woman, to discover if Ruth was used to more comforts than I could give her. I could see that every other fellow was doing likewise.

"Finally the day came for Ruth to arrive. We were all nervous and fidgety and tried to pretend that we weren't. The result was that we were cross as a lot of bears around the place! We hadn't decided who should call first.

"Then there was a telephone message asking us all to come down that evening to a candy pull that the little old peach was going to have, so we could meet Ruth. Gee! Most of us got there at 7:30!"

"And Ruth?" asked the little stenographer.

"She was all that she had been cracked up to be—but she had three boys with her, the oldest 18, and they were all her own!

"We'd been so fascinated by our little old peach that we hadn't reflected that she was as old as our own grandmothers and that naturally her daughter would be our own mothers' age!

"Ruth was a peach—but somehow the zest of it did not last."

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An Island Vendetta
Or, Sea Prisoners
By Willard E. Hawkins

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Begun in No. 45, November 4. Subscriptions can begin with that issue or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER XI.
DANGEROUS PROXIMITY.

THE state of mind in which these three strongly individualized people took up their life on the island can be readily imagined. Intimately associated, they were like the elements composing nitroglycerin, needing only a jar, a shock, to precipitate an explosion.

After that first attempt to dislodge the other, Matt accepted the situation, contenting himself with keeping a sharp, suspicious lookout. It became more and more apparent that Reuel's statement was no idle boast. He held some threatening sword over the girl's head, and it was plain that she feared him as if he had been an embassy of Satan.

So while the two men lived together and moved in the same orbit, they were eying each other with smoldering enmity. Each remained in the vicinity of the cottage as much as possible, keeping jealous eyes upon Mrs. Leavering and ready to check the slightest effort on the part of the other to gain an ascendency over her.

Strangely enough, there was no mention of Horace Leavering during the three days that this situation lasted, altho Matt constantly dreaded and steeled himself for the revelation. She seemed to regard her husband's absence as merely more prolonged than usual.

On one or two occasions, Reuel Vogt left the field entirely to his opponent, absenting himself for hours [illegible] the woods. Matt took advantage of the first opportunity to demand a full explanation from the girl.

"I cannot enlighten you," she said. "Please, please! don't make it harder by questioning me."

"But things can't go on like this forever," he retorted vehemently. "I want to help you, but it is all a struggle in the dark. If you take me into your confidence, I can surely do something!"

She looked at him hesitatingly, and for the moment he felt that she was inclined to yield. There was a look in the depths of her dark eyes that he interpreted as longing to unburden her mind of its weighty secrets. But the mood passed away.

"No. I—dare not. This is something that I must bear alone. The slightest risk is more than I have a right to take."

"You can't handle it alone. Whatever your trouble is, I can see it is too big for you."

Her denial was indignant. "Indeed, I can handle it! Another person would make it doubly hard."

"Is my half-brother Reuel involved?"

"He is one of the factors that make it more difficult for me."

"Then let me have the satisfaction of settling with him," said Matt, eagerly.

"No, no!" she implored. "Whatever happens, promise that you won't make matters worse by a fight with your brother. If there should be a murder committed on this island, I would go insane. You can't conceive the horror I have of such a thought!"

"Suppose he attacks me—or you?" countered Matt, doggedly.

"You need not be the aggressor."

"If it will gratify you I can promise that much. I am sorry I can only be of assistance in this negative way."

"You will be doing much for me, if you keep peace," she replied simply.

It was out of the question for cordial relations to exist, even tho Ruth's efforts seemed determined to bring about such a result. The impartiality with which she treated the two men grated on Matt's sensibilities. As she had said, they were all entitled to equal rights on the island; but to one who knew of the carousing life led by Reuel Vogt, it seemed monstrous that she could accept him into her society.

Reuel exhibited certain entertaining qualities, to be sure. He had a cynical, blasphemous sort of originality coupled with a varied experience and a trick of expressing himself vividly. His rich, untrained voice was an additional accomplishment. Even Matt was forced to acknowledge that another mode of life and other associations than those of the barrom and forecastle might have developed a different man of Reuel Vogt.

One thing was apparent. The strained state of affairs on the island had been increased by another complication since Reuel accomplished the schemes that gave him more than equal footing with the others on the island. Two men were now vying for the favor of the entire female population.

CHAPTER XII.
A THREAT.

ON THE fourth morning, as Bellamy lay stretched out in the hammock which was hung between a pillar of the porch and a nearby tree, Reuel and the girl met as if by prearrangement. Something in their manner was significant—just what, Bellamy could hardly have explained, but he was instantly on the alert. A few words of low-voiced conversation, which he did not succeed in understanding, passed between them, then they parted. Reuel walked with apparently casual steps into the woods; the girl stepped inside.

That this was the forerunner of another prolonged trip on Reuel's part, and that Ruth's secret had some connection with the absences, seemed apparent. Without a moment's hesitation Matt sprang from the hammock and followed in the direction taken by Reuel. The other was proceeding with very little caution, crashing his way thru the brush.

After about ten minutes the crashing came to an abrupt pause, at which Matt also stopped. The silence lasted so interminably that he began to think he had fallen victim to a ruse. He was about to steal forward stealthily, when the threshing of the underbrush was recommenced.

Reuel had changed his course, and was returning. As Matt drew back from the direct path, the man came into view, walking slowly, his hands clenched, and his jaw set in ugly lines—evidences of strong internal conflict. The sullen eyes were bent toward the ground. With vicious kicks he thrust aside the saplings, and as the foliage closed, hiding him from the stalker's eyes, something like a low growl escaped him.

Convinced that there was a menace in the altered attitude of the other, Matt followed with apprehension added to his curiosity. He saw the other stride toward the cottage, where he paused and gave a low call, at which Ruth appeared in the door.

Matt had little difficulty in silencing his scruples against listening by the argument that she might be in danger. He made his way cautiously around to the side of the cottage. The voices were clearly audible, that of the girl raised two or three times in sharp protest; the man's determined, aggressive, domineering.

"You can't do such a thing!" she insisted vehemently. "What will become of us, if you refuse?"

"You've made up your mind about me," he interrupted roughly; "so I suppose it's useless to protest. But I tell you I'm making you take these back because I've changed my mind. I'm thru with the business. I'm thru swallowing insults. I'm going back to the woods. I don't like this game."

"But I have done everything I could to——"

"I'm not saying you haven't." A long pause. "Will you take these back?"

"No, no, no!"

"Just as you please. I can tear them up, if you refuse."

Matt's temper had reached the boiling stage. Both speakers exhibited surprise and confusion as he appeared around the corner.

"I guess we've had about enough of this bullying," he remarked determinedly.

Reuel surveyed him insolently. "What right have you got butting in?"

"If you speak of right," said Bellamy, "I've got the right of this little weapon, which seems to cover the case pretty effectively." An impulse caused him to add, in a low, intense voice: "I've got the right that belongs to every man—the right to protect the weak from the oppressor."

Reuel emitted a short, mocking laugh.

"I am not in need of a protector," said Mrs. Leavering, coldly. "I am well able to take care of my own interests without constant interference, and I have a husband, who——"

"Your husband?" said Reuel, sharply. He caught himself and added in a lower tone: "Your husband will not be able to help you in this case. It is time you knew it."

She reached gropingly for support. It seemed for a moment that she would faint, but she regained control over herself by a supreme effort.

"You mean he is——?"

Reuel confirmed her meaning with a nod. His lips formed the word, "Dead," altho he seemed scarcely to articulate it.

"Did you——" she faltered, turning to Bellamy—"did you know—about this?"

He bowed his head in acknowledgment.

"All the time?"

"From the first day on the island."

For a moment the girl's eyes studied his face suspiciously. Then, as if realizing that his motives had been those of compassion, she reached out her hand and placed it on his sleeve. Reuel stiffened at this revelation of trust.

"I am going to leave you a clear field," he said, with a sneer. "Look at it, if you wish, as a tribute to your bravery. Here——" he drew forth a small packet of folded papers and turned toward the girl—"will you take them, or shall I pass them over to him?"

With a gasp of dismay, she sprang forward and snatched the papers, then turned and ran into the cottage. The two men were left alone.

"Perhaps you think that little gun has frightened me," said Reuel. "Why, you chump!" He whipped out a short-barreled six-shooter and broke it to reveal the cartridges in the chamber. "I could have killed you a dozen times while you stood there talking!"

Matt stared at the weapon.

"I didn't know," he said, "that there was another revolver on the island. I don't see——"

"A lot of things about this island you don't know," said Reuel, grimly. "That's one of the disadvantages of butting into a soft snap the first thing. I'm the dirt under your feet now, but that's because I don't choose to assert myself. I'll get you—in my own time and my own way. But first I'm going to have the fun of playing with you. You'll never see me; but everywhere you go I'll be near, covering you with this little demon of death."

Matt took the threat calmly. "Like the skulking cur that you are," he replied.

"Skulking cur!" repeated Vogt. "That's another name to treasure up. Just remember the skulking cur when you find yourself in kingdom come."

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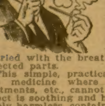

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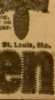

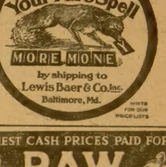
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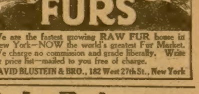
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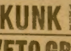

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he turned and stalked toward the bushes, which soon hid his gaunt shoulders and brick-colored cranium from view.

CHAPTER XIII.

AN ABANDONED QUEST.

FOR the balance of the afternoon, Ruth Leavering kept to her room, and Bellamy respected her grief by absenting himself from the cottage. When she made her appearance the next morning, there were traces of tears in her eyes, but she was perfectly collected. With a few commonplaces, they resumed their previous footing of rather distant companionship.

After a time she spoke of her husband. Her voice was well controlled; but the tragedy had evidently affected her deeply, the more deeply because of her indifference before she learned of her husband's fate. Matt told her what he knew of the circumstances.

"We were never meant for each other," she said, "in this way—as husband and wife; but now that it is too late for reparation—oh, I feel unutterably guilty! I failed miserably in adapting myself to him. You can't realize what a hopeless task it is to adapt oneself to a person already buried in and absorbed by scientific study. The only thing that made our existence together possible was my decision to live my own life independently. It did not matter to him. He never noticed anything lacking, and we were no nearer than good friends. But to learn so suddenly of his death!"

There was no doubting the sincerity of her emotion. But her grief was the sorrow over the death of an old friend—not a husband. And Matt could not find it in his heart to condemn her. It was not her fault that she failed to accord Horace Leavering the sorrow of a bereaved wife. It was the misfortune of the man who had failed to arouse her power of devotion.

"There was a time," she continued, "back in New York, when I thought seriously of divorce. We talked the situation over calmly. Then he proposed our coming here, as a remedy. The one thing, according to his idea, necessary to cause those of the opposite sex to fall violently in love was what he termed 'isolated propinquity.' Think of hoping to evolve love by scientific means!

"Nevertheless, the idea appealed to me. We were to go to some isolated place and try life together under primitive conditions. Mr. Froelich—a friend of my husband's—had discovered this island in his cruising about the world, and Horace was anxious to visit it. He fell in heartily with the plan—in fact, he planned most of the details—and you know the rest."

To Bellamy, the idea appeared preposterous, and yet he could realize that a woman driven to the limits of boredom might find in it some appeal. If nothing else, it contained the elements of romance and adventure. And its possibilities for research had undoubtedly enthralled her husband.

To draw her thoughts away from the painful subject, he mentioned another strange matter which had occurred to him as needing investigation.

"I wish you would tell me," he remarked, "how it happens that there is a second revolver on this island."

"Another revolver!" Her surprised inflection was suddenly replaced by confusion. "It must be—I—I suppose it is one that Horace—my husband—carried. How did you happen to——?"

"Reuel showed it to me," replied Bellamy, to whom the explanation was far from satisfactory. But he was growing accustomed to having his questions met by evasion. It had become evident that if he was ever to learn the entire truth he must ferret it out for himself.

Following his usual custom, which was to shoulder all possible labor connected with the little establishment, he was engaged, the morning after this discussion, in the domestic occupation of washing dishes, when he caught sight of Ruth just disappearing in the trees.

Dropping the task, which he was performing with indifferent success, but well-meaning efforts, he paused for a moment's reflection. His glimpse had showed her attired in a short skirt of khaki and other details of costume, including high walking boots, that presaged a considerable expedition. Would he be justified in following her?

His answer, after a moment or two of deliberation, was that his duty lay in seeing that no harm came to her in a region that might contain unexpected dangers.

This was his half-apology as he followed in her footsteps, in much the same manner as he had shadowed Reuel Vogt. She went on toward the entrance of a ravine which looked very like the one Matt had selected as a starting-point for his climb a few days before. Several times Matt lost sight of her and hastened his steps. As she commenced the ascent of the rocky slope, it became increasingly difficult to keep her in sight without betraying himself.

Suddenly he recoiled, for with utter unexpectedness she had stepped from a niche in the rock and stood confronting him. Her eyes, steady, cold and inquiring, held him rooted. A slow flush mantled his sunburned face.

"Why do you find it necessary to spy on me?" she demanded.

"I—I—" he stammered. Then he caught himself up and replied resolutely: "I am not spying. That is not my purpose. I have followed in case you need protection."

"I do not feel the need of a bodyguard. I have an errand that I can not perform, if you follow. I must ask you to let me go on alone."

"I can't do it!" he exclaimed. "You expect me to sit idly by while you rush into all kinds of danger."

"You refuse to let me go on alone?" she asked, with a glance from under her dark lashes that he could not quite analyze.

"Yes," he replied doggedly.

"In that case," she responded, apparently accepting the situation with a certain amount of amusment, since she found it inevitable, "please walk along beside me. I can't endure the sensation of being followed."

He allowed her to lead the way, content merely to be with her, regardless of the destination. Her purposeful air had vanished. She seemed content to stroll aimlessly along the base of the rocks, pausing to gather flowers and berries by the wayside, giving herself wholly to enjoyment.

At every step, the girl by his side appeared to Matt more bewitching, more appealing, more desirable. And it seemed that she, on her part, felt something of this joy, for she revealed to him a side of her nature more than usually expressive and responsive.

"You have read a great deal—and studied more than usual—for a sailor, haven't you?" she suggested, as they rested in the shade during the middle of the day.

"I have had certain advantages," replied Matt, grimly.

"Off here," she murmured, "so far from conventions and civilization, it is strange how little it seems to matter what one is—or was."

"Tell me," he demanded, with sudden seriousness, "if we were never rescued—if the ship never came—would you find life here entirely hateful? I mean, of course, in case something happened to prevent Mr. Froelich from coming."

"Don't speak of it!" she exclaimed, with a look of pain.

But he continued: "When you first mentioned Froelich's name, do you recall my saying it seemed as if I had heard or read of it before?"

"I—I don't recall." Her bosom was rising and falling with extreme agitation. Her eyes were wide with horror and her cheeks pale. Her evident desire not to pursue the subject caused him to hesitate. Evidently the best thing he could do was to change the subject.

"Undoubtedly your friends will manage to find the island," he said.

"Yes," she responded apathetically.

"I am certain we can count on it," he reassured her.

"For me," she said slowly, "the coming of the vessel has come to mean nothing. I feel—that I will never leave the island."

"That is fatalistic."

"Perhaps. But I know that the coming of a rescue party will never mean anything to me."

"Don't! You frighten me!" exclaimed Bellamy. "What makes you think these morbid things?"

"It is not morbidness," she answered. "No, really it is not. It is the result of a long, hard battle. I have fought it out within myself, and the conclusion has brought me peace."

"Mrs. Leavering!" he cried, aghast at the vague possibilities suggested by her words.

"At any rate," she answered, "there is no need worrying until the time comes—if it ever does. Let us talk of more cheerful matters."

But the conversation languished. Both were preoccupied. Bellamy was genuinely disturbed by what she had told him. Presently he succumbed to the drowsy heat of the noonday sun, and while still pondering, dozed off on the mossy rock surface. He could hear her softly humming to herself as she sat with her back

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toward him, looking out across the treetops; then all was merged in the forgetfulness of slumber.

He was awakened from a dream in which he saw himself sailing away, while on the shore Ruth Leavering stood a lonely figure, holding out her arms appealingly toward the departing vessel. He raised himself on one elbow and discovered that he was alone.

Then his consciousness was pierced by a series of faint, shrill cries. They came from a distant point toward the water's edge. Scrambling to his feet, he listened intently for a moment, then dashed madly thru the trees, clutching tightly his comforting, if useless revolver.

Unmistakable was the nature of the call. It was an appeal for help in a woman's voice!

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SUCTION MONSTER.

BEFORE he had covered more than a few rods of the distance, the cries ceased abruptly. Fearful of he knew not what danger and uncertain from what particular point the call had come, Matt rushed back and forth in the neighborhood which seemed to him that from which the cries had come.

Only a short distance beyond lay the beach, a dank, swampy stretch at this point. He ran along the edge calling incessantly, and plunged knee-deep in a bed of soft mire. In his struggles to escape, he felt himself sinking. With each step toward the solid ground, his feet slipped deeper toward the center.

A great horror came over him. He realized the nature of the mire that held his feet in its soft, oozing grasp. It was quicksand!

Over his head stretched the branches of a wide-spreading tree. From these were suspended a growth of snake-like creepers, some of which almost touched his shoulders. Like a drowning man, Matt reached up and clutched a great handful of the slender vines. They held.

With restrained eagerness, he drew them down until the branch from which they hung was bent into a quivering bow, one end within his reach. By this slender support he carefully and slowly drew himself up and out of the mire—to safety.

Quicksand! Ugh!

Shivering, he crouched on the edge, staring with fascinated eyes at the deadly quagmire. The shore, for a wide distance, was lined with the bottomless, fluid sand. And this was the locality from which the cries for help had come! Little wonder that they had suddenly ceased, if——

He refused to believe it. Anything—anything except that! Any form of death would be better than smothering in a pool of noisome mud. Matt stumbled thru the underbrush, his eyes and ears terribly alert, half sobbing in his fear and anxiety.

It was in this frame of mind that he stumbled into view of Reuel Vogt. It was the flaming crop of red hair that first drew his gaze. Reuel was bending over something—and the next instant Matt recognized the object as the limp body of the girl.

His first emotion was hysterical relief. The revulsion from this was anger, fierce, blazing, primitve.

The cries for help were easily explained. Wandering away, she had fallen into the clutches of the other man. He had forced himself upon her, perhaps attacked her—in continuation of the dispute Matt had interrupted only a day or so previous. She had fled, uttering the agonized cries that woke Bellamy from his sleep; but in the unequal race her alarm was quickly silenced.

With all the ferocity of an avenging tiger, Bellamy sprang toward the other man. If he had not been half wild with anger and anxiety, he would have waited for Reuel to recover. But in this moment it was nothing to him that his victim was kneeling with his back turned. Reuel had just sufficient warning to glance around and see the other's fist upraised for a crashing blow.

But the blow never descended, and Matt was saved from an act that would have plunged him in remorse for a long time after. The hand dropped limply to his side. All his passion fled, leaving him weak and shaken.

"Is that—what you have been doing?" he demanded gaspingly.

Reuel had not flinched nor paused in his occupation. He was engaged in bathing the girl's forehead with a dripping white handkerchief. She was deathly pale, but a convulsive tremor gave evidence of returning life.

Higher than their knees, both the girl and the man were swathed in the same dark, sticky mire that covered Bellamy's extremities. The situation told its own story.

Matt felt deeply humbled. "I didn't know you were doing that," he explained, and stammered on: "I thought at first—something different had taken place. I want to thank you—Reuel for saving her—in time."

Reuel turned upon him with a snarl. "You thank me! Do you suppose I saved her life for you?"

Matt was silent. His advance repulsed, he felt the old anger, which had been vanquished for the moment by relief and gratitude, boiling up again; but he held himself in check. The two men thereafter ignored each other as they watched the symptoms of returning life in the figure of the girl.

She opened her eyes wide with bewilderment, staring uncomprehendingly at her surroundings. Then her glance came to rest on Matt's countenance. They gazed at each other for a long moment. The man sank down on his knees beside her, and glancing up saw a look of such bitter jealousy in the face of the other man that he involuntarily extended a protecting arm.

"It was a close call, wasn't it?" she said, with a faint smile; then, turning away: "I want to thank my rescuer."

But Reuel had disappeared. So silently had he taken himself off thru the trees that it almost seemed as if he had vanished in thin air.

"Oh, isn't that too bad!" exclaimed Ruth, in vexation. "I ought to have spoken to him first—but one doesn't think of everything in the first moment of coming to life. It was the most horrible sensation. You can never imagine——"

"I know," interrupted Bellamy, pointing grimly down to his own begrimed garments.

"You, too, were in danger!" she cried.

He nodded. With the memory of his sensations so vivid in mind he did not feel like talking about them. "Own up," he commanded, half sternly, half in an endeavor to give the conversation a lighter turn. "You were trying to give me the slip."

She glanced at him in an odd, embarrassed manner. "I should not have come this way. I knew very well there was danger from the quicksand on this shore."

"It is a sign," he assured her, "that you need my protection—always."

"Perhaps," she acknowledged faintly.

They arrived at the cottage shortly after sunset. They enjoyed a simple meal together on the veranda, their voices hushed by the memory of their narrow escapes. A new sense of comradeship seemed to have grown up between them. The imminence of tragedy in their daily lives, as revealed during the few hours before the sun had set, had humbled both proud natures.

There was a quiet and peace upon their spirits this evening that Matt never forgot. In light of later developments, he came to regard the atmosphere as analogous to the fateful calm preceding a raging storm.

CHAPTER XV.

FROM OUT OF THE WORLD.

THEY had fallen into the way of long silences, the sweetest essence of companionship. The first premonitions of twilight found them gazing out over the ocean, where the calmness of the faint horizon was only equaled by the tranquillity of their thoughts.

From which musings there was a sudden and rude awakening. Matt sprang to his feet with a start that sent his chair over backward and nearly upset the little table.

"Great Smoke!" he cried. "Look what's coming!"

She saw it almost at the same instant—a vessel under full headway, which had rounded into view from behind the treetops. It was less than two miles distant, approaching under strong head of steam.

(Continued on Page 15.)

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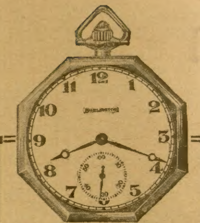

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CHAPTER IV.

"MAKE yourself quite at home, Mr. Sheriff," the girl sneered sarcastically, by way of greeting, blowing a cloud of smoke up into the already stifling atmosphere. "You've sure got your nerve right along with you! Mr. Larabee will have something to say, I fancy, when he finds that his house has been entered and his guest disturbed in this manner."

"Possibly," the sheriff dryly retorted, "but I shouldn't count on it, if I were you. Maxwell Larabee is at present beyond coming to your rescue, and for the moment this house and its occupants are under my personal charge. If you wish to remain here undisturbed you had better answer my questions. I should like to know who you are and how you happen to be here at this time?"

The girl laughed musically and deposited her cigarette-end in a brass ashtray. Her acting was almost perfect and she seemed fully at her ease, altho the keen-eyed visitor had detected a little start of something far stronger than surprise at his mention of Larabee.

"That's a large order, Mr. Sheriff," she drawled, with a lazy smile, "a mighty large order, and while I won't deny that you may have a certain right to ask, I'm not at all sure that I shall answer as fully as you wish. I don't mind telling my name, tho; it's Miss Eva Saunders, and I'm a friend of Max Larabee's, come here by appointment on—shall I say?—a little matter of business. Now, even you can't make anything wrong out of that." She laughed softly again.

"Perhaps not, miss," very dryly, "but I should, nevertheless, like very much to know why you visited the body out there in the meadow this morning, and why you have been so anxious to hide from me?"

If a bomb had been unexpectedly dropped into the room, Miss Saunders could not have appeared more shocked and terrified than she seemed at the sheriff's quietly spoken words. For a long interval, while the mocking smile slowly faded from her pretty face, leaving it nearly as white as the snow thru which she had plowed early that morning, she stared wide-eyed at the man, half rising from the divan and clutching at its coverings as she did so; then she fell back and buried her face in a pillow.

"My God!" she moaned. "Oh, my God!" And then she broke into a series of dry, convulsive sobs, which made the startled officer, somewhat hardened tho he was, fairly squirm in his chair.

For a little, Sheriff Parker regarded her in pitying surprise. Whatever his thoughts of her possible connection with the morning's tragedy and Larabee's disappearance, he had not guessed for an instant that his mere mention of her visit to the field would affect his hearer in such a fashion; and for a bit he was almost as unstrung, tho in a different sense, as was she. Then, as she continued to sob heartbrokenly, he got up and took a step toward her.

"Please, please, Miss Saunders," he begged, "don't take on this way. I did not intend to hurt you, really, I didn't. Try to compose yourself and tell me all you can of this dreadful business. You'll find that I shall help you if I can."

The girl raised her head slightly and stared at him thru spread fingers as tho making up her mind to something for a moment, and her sobs gradually lessened.

"You can't help me, sheriff," she choked, finally, in a terrible voice. "No one can do that. I'm guilty—guilty as hell! But my part in the story is soon told. He—Michael Stronsky was my brother!"

The slow, deliberate ticking of a clock somewhere in the room was all that broke the stillness for many minutes. The girl's sobbing had entirely ceased, and she returned the sheriff's glance with the stony unseeing eyes of one too hopeless even to think of consequences. Then Sheriff Parker hitched his chair forward, sat down in it, and leaned toward her.

"You'd better tell me the whole story, Miss Saunders," he suggested, in a soothing tone. "Whatever it may be, you've said too much now to stop halfway."

"I suppose I have," Miss Saunders, or Stronsky, admitted in a lifeless voice, "and for myself I don't care. I dare say I've done wrong, but my wrongdoing is a small thing compared to what has happened to my poor brother. Now that he is dead I have nothing to hide. I wasn't very crazy about the scheme from the beginning; I can tell you that, whether you believe me or not, Mr. Sheriff; but Mike thought he saw a chance to make a stake and the money talked.

"You probably know Max Larabee better than I do. He's like a lot of rich men—a regular wolf in a sheep corral when it comes to women. Well, I'll not go into that part of it; but, you see, I was the bait. I lured him out here into the country so Mike and his friend could get their hands on him—that was my share of the game. Where he is now I don't know nor care, and I only hope that I'll never lay eyes on his ugly face again."

She stopped talking and dropped her eyes to the rug, while the sheriff regarded her speculatively. The idea that she might not be telling him the truth never entered his head; he was too keen a judge of human nature not to recognize sincerity when he saw it; but her words gave him considerable food for thought. Up to the moment of his arrival at the farm that night and his talk with Jase, he had half believed that Larabee himself had been concerned in the murder, and that the kidnaping had been faked up to cover his tracks. Now, however, he began to doubt this, altho what he had learned that evening had by no means explained Stronsky's death.

"This friend of your brother's," he asked, at length, "who is he, do you know?"

"No, I don't; but he's no friend of Larabee's. It was him that hatched up the whole plot—Mike was only his assistant, and Mike got me into it. I never saw the other man."

"I see. You've no idea then where Larabee could have been taken? You know none of the details of the kidnaping?"

"None at all, Mr. Sheriff. My part was only to get him to meet me here; and when I came that night it was snowing and I was wet and cold. I went right to sleep and I never knew a thing till morning. I knew, you see, that they intended to get Larabee on his way out here—he said he couldn't come till very late—so I was prepared when he didn't show up. But I wasn't sure just what had happened until—until—well, I——"

Sheriff Parker nodded sympathetically, as her voice broke.

"I understand," he said. "It must have been a great shock to you. I'm afraid that you will have to accompany me back to the city early in the morning. Under the circumstances, I shall try to make things fairly easy for you; but your evidence must be recorded. For the present I shall leave you to yourself."

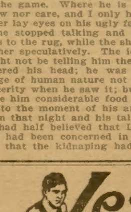
Next morning, after he had safely disposed of the almost heartbroken girl—for whatever her faults Eva Stronsky seemed to have loved her brother devotedly—Sheriff Parker entered his own office, where he found the coroner waiting for him.

"The plot thickens, Horace," he remarked blithely, sitting down on the corner of his flat desk and lighting a cigar. "The girl has broken down and confessed; I have learned a few things. She is Stronsky's sister."

"You don't say so, Bert! That, at least, is a step in the right direction. What was she doing at Larabee's?"

"Knowing Larabee's reputation, you might guess that, Horace. This girl, however, is a little different—she was there with a purpose. In fact, she lured Larabee into the hands of the kidnapers. They were waiting when he came, and they grabbed him out there in the meadow where the girl's brother met his end."

"But that's impossible, Bert." Doctor Morse shook his head stubbornly. "You know as well as I do that there were no tracks in the snow except such as we



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SPECIAL NOTE—Dr. E. Sauer, a physician who has studied widely in both this country and Europe, has been specially employed to make a thorough investigation into the real secret of the great strength, power and endurance of Jess Willard, and the marvelous value of nuxated iron as a strength builder.

NEW YORK—Upon being interviewed at his apartment in the Colonial Hotel, Mr. Willard said: "Yes, I have a chemist with me to study the value of different foods and products as to their power to produce great strength and endurance, both of which are so necessary in the prize ring. On his recommendation I have often taken nuxated iron and I have particularly advocated the free use of iron by all those who wish to obtain great physical and mental power. Without it I am sure that I should never have been able to whip Jack Johnson so completely and easily as I did and while training for my fight with Frank Moran, I regularly took nuxated iron, and I am certain that it was a most important factor in my winning the fight so easily." Continuing, Dr. Sauer said: "Mr. Willard's case is only one of hundreds which I could cite from my own personal experience which proves conclusively the astonishing power of nuxated iron to restore strength and vitality even in most complicated chronic conditions."

Not long ago a man came to me who was nearly half a century old, and asked me to give him a preliminary examination for life insurance. I was astonished to find him with the blood pressure of a boy of 20 and as full of vigor, vim and vitality as a young man—in fact, a young man he really was, notwithstanding his age. The secret he said was taking iron—nuxated iron had filled him with renewed life. At 30 he was in bad health; at 46 careworn and nearly all in. Now at 50 a miracle of vitality and his face beaming with the buoyancy of youth. As I have said a hundred times over iron is the greatest of all strength builders. If people would only throw away patent medicines and nauseous concoctions and take simple nuxated iron, I am convinced that the lives of thousands of persons might be saved who now die every year from pneumonia, grippe, consumption, kidney, liver and heart trouble, etc. The real and true cause which started their diseases was nothing more or less than a weakened condition brought on by lack of iron in the blood. Iron is absolutely necessary to enable your blood to change food into living tissue. Without it, no matter how much or what you eat your food merely passes through you without doing you any good. You don't get the strength out of it, and as a consequence you become weak, pale and sickly looking, just like a plant trying to grow in soil deficient in iron. If you are not strong or well, you owe it to yourself to make the following test: See how long you can work, or how far you can walk without becoming tired. Next take two five-grain tablets of ordinary nuxated iron three times per day after meals for two weeks. Then test your strength again and see for yourself how much you have gained. I have seen dozens of nervous, run-down people who were ailing all the while, double their strength and endurance and entirely get rid of all symptoms of dyspepsia, liver and other troubles in from ten to fourteen days' time simply by taking iron in the proper form. And this after they had in some cases been doctoring for months without obtaining any benefit. But don't take the old forms of reduced iron, iron acetate or tincture of iron simply to save a few cents. You must take iron in a form that can be easily absorbed and assimilated like nuxated iron if you want it to do you any good, otherwise it may prove worse than useless.

JESS WILLARD AT HOME

Among all the prominent figures of the prize ring, probably none is so devoted to family life as Jess Willard. After each engagement the champion hurries to his wife and children and remains at their side until public demand forces him to leave for new encounters. Everything is done to bring up the "little Willards" with strong healthy bodies. Mr. Willard accounts for his own success by saying:—

"I consider that plenty of iron in my blood is the secret of my great strength, power and endurance."

Jess Willard

Many an athlete or prize fighter has won the day simply because he knew the secret of great strength and endurance and filled his blood with iron before he went into the affray, while many another has gone to inglorious defeat simply for the lack of iron.—E. Sauer, M. D.

NOTE—Nuxated Iron, recommended above by Dr. Sauer, is not a patent medicine nor secret remedy, but one which is well known to druggists and whose iron constituents are widely prescribed by eminent physicians everywhere. Unlike the older inorganic iron products, it is easily assimilated, does not injure the teeth, make them black, nor upset the stomach; on the contrary, it is a most potent remedy in nearly all forms of indigestion as well as for nervous, run-down conditions. The manufacturers have such great confidence in Nuxated Iron that they offer to forfeit $100.00 to any charitable institution if they cannot take any man or woman under 60 who lacks iron and increase their strength 200 per cent. or over in four weeks' time, provided they have no serious organic trouble. They also offer to refund your money if it does not at least double your strength and endurance in ten days' time. It is dispensed by all druggists.

could account for and absolutely no sign of a struggle. Larabee could not have been seized there."

"It doesn't look like it, I'll admit, Horace," Sheriff Parker agreed, a little doubtfully, "but once again I must warn you not to jump at conclusions. Max Larabee was seized right there in that meadow for the very good and simple reason that he could not have been seized anywhere else. Remember, we know positively that he walked into the field, even if we don't know how he left it.

"I examined the spot again this morning just to refresh my memory, and one or two points struck me very forcibly. For one thing, how did Stronsky's dead body arrive in the middle of that snow-covered meadow without a track to show how it got there? For another, why did Larabee stop short in his stride the way he did; and finally, how was the snow swept off the top of that rock when no person—I judge from the unbroken surface of the snow, of course—went within a dozen feet of it?"

Doctor Morse shook his head hopelessly.

"You've got me," he confessed. "Human bodies do not vanish into thin air these days, but it seems almost as if Max Larabee had done so."

"Perhaps, he did, Horace," the sheriff commented, with an odd smile, "perhaps he did. Your guess may not be as wild as it seems. But enough of this. I think I shall have another interview with our little cocaine sufferer. By this time he should be desperate enough to be truthful, and I still have hopes of learning something from him. Let's go look him over."

The two men left the office and proceeded along the corridor to the room in which the messenger had been confined. He apparently heard them coming, for he met them at the door when it was opened as eagerly as a starving beast might meet the bearer of fresh meat. A hideous change had taken place in the shock-headed, ungainly youth of the previous day. His face was now the face of an old man, furrowed and shrunken, and ghastly in its pallor; his eyes glowed like live coals in their sunken sockets, and his bird-claw hands twisted and writhed unceasingly.

"Did you bring me any?" he croaked. "Just one sniff—one little pinch, for God's sake! I can't stand this any longer. I'll go crazy, I tell you! Get me outa here—let me go where I can get some 'coke,' gents, or I'll die!"

"No, I haven't got any, Dan; tho I can get you some," Sheriff Parker answered soothingly. "But you must answer my questions first."

"Gimme the 'coke' first!" the youth's voice rose almost to a scream. "I can't talk without it. Get it for me first an' I'll tell you everything."

"Answer the questions first, or you'll get no 'coke' at all! Doctor Morse here will work on you instead and try to cure you; you know what that'll mean. Now, tell me, quick! Who gave you that note for Larabee?"

There was a stern, ringing quality in the officer's voice which beat like a hammer on the boy's feverish brain; but he gazed dully at his tormentor.

Doctor Morse watched him critically. It was well known to him that drug users, when full of their drug, would lie for hours at a time and glory in it; but when the drug had died and they were in need of it, their imagination was stagnant and thinking was a torture. Then they usually told the truth because it was easier than to invent a falsehood.

"Note? Larabee?" Meager repeated vaguely, passing a skinny hand over his face. "Oh, yes, Mr. Larabee—I remember. I got it from a man—a tall guy—don't know who he was. Now gi'me just a sniff, for——"

"Not yet, Dan. You must be patient. What did this man look like? Who was he?"

"I don't know, I tell you. Like most big business guys, I s'pose. He was tall an' smooth-shaved, an' he carried a grip. Said he was a friend of Larabee's an' wanted to play a joke on him. Oh, yes, I remember something else now. He looked like that feller that done the balloon stunt at the ball grounds last fall—only this guy was dressed up. I don't know no more, gents, honest I don't. Now, gi'me the 'coke'!"

Doctor Morse took a leather medicine case from his pocket and gave the boy a small dose of the drug for which he craved; then they left him alone and returned to the sheriff's office.

"Not much use, was it, Bert?" the coroner was saying, when the sheriff suddenly slapped his thigh a resounding smack. "By George, I have it!" he exclaimed. "He told the truth, after all, I believe. It's the only possible hypothesis—it must be the fellow!"

Doctor Morse looked at his friend eagerly.

"You've guessed it?" he demanded. "You think——"

"Not too fast, Horace," Sheriff Parker laughed a little excitedly. "I haven't got it yet: but it's coming — it's coming! That dislodged snow on the rock, Larabee's suddenly ended tracks, the entire absence of footprints so far as Stronsky was concerned; and our 'coker's' reference to a balloon—they all fit together like bricks. The thing is possible, at least, altho it's something new in the annals of crime. But it must be so—it must be so! It's the only reasonable solution, Horace. It must be Brookes—it surely must be Brookes!"

The little sheriff broke into an expansive smile and began to rub his hands together in his joy and enthusiasm, while his friend regarded him with puzzled eyes.

"Brookes, Brookes?" he repeated questioningly. "Who in Heaven's name is Brookes, Bert? I must confess that you have me guessing."

"You shouldn't be," Parker rejoined, with a little chuckle. "Just reason it out for yourself, Horace. You know the facts—you heard the boy. However, we shall see presently. Are you game for a ride? Well, then, let's be moving. It's not far out there and we can drive it in an hour. I must get Jase—we may need him."

For a time they drove in silence and then, with a sudden laugh Doctor Morse clapped the sheriff on the shoulder.

"I'm beginning to see it, Bert," he cried. "I see what you're driving at. It's Langdon Brookes, that odd genius on the Willow turnpike. He's the only balloon man in this region. You think he kidnaped Larabee in order to get money for those experiments of his—we all know he's been mighty hard up. The thing seems out of the question; but you may be right—you may be rignt."

He broke off and fell to chuckling over his own perspicacity, while Big Jase, sitting in the back, flashed his ivories in a wide, good-natured grin, as tho he comprehended the situation thoroly.

"Don't be too sanguine, Horace," Sheriff Parker cautioned, as he leaned forward to guide his team over a bad spot in the road. "I'm not positive myself; but it surely looks good. Brookes would go to almost any lengths to further those schemes of his, and Larabee is a very wealthy man. The strange absence of tracks in the field and that odd sound Mrs. Flagg claims to have heard from somewhere up above her could be accounted for by the use of an aircraft of some kind, you know. It's really the only logical hypothesis."

It was mid-afternoon when the sheriff pulled up his horses in front of the rambling farmhouse in which Langdon Brookes, inventor and eccentric recluse, made his home. To the rear of the house was a long, high-studded barn, which had been turned into a workshop, and it was toward this building that the three men headed when a servant told them that Mr. Brookes was busy there. As they approached it they noticed a huge balloon, two-thirds filled with gas, tugging at a cable which held it in the air about thirty or forty feet from the ground at the farther side of the barn near a grove of cottonwoods.

"Humph!" muttered the sheriff, eying it. "Brookes still has his old gas-bag evidently—I understood he had abandoned it since he became interested in his newfangled monoplane." Quietly opening a small side door in the barn, he stepped within, closely followed by the coroner and Big Jase.

The place in which they found themselves was long, narrow and lofty, piled high with huge crates and odds and ends of lumber and machinery until it was all but impassable. A little farther on, however, the barn had been cleared all the way to a pair of huge double doors which stood wide open to admit the waning sunlight; and in this cleared area two men bent over a strange-looking contrivance, which the visitors guessed to be the aeroplane upon which the inventor had been working for many months.

Langdon Brookes was a tall, lean man, with a long, hooked nose, and a pair of sharp gray eyes that constantly shifted from point to point as tho their owner's mind was busy with a thousand thoughts. He was a little stooped about the shoulders and his voice was harsh and forbidding; he had the reputation of being a queer man to deal with, and he had never been known to possess an intimate friend. For the moment so immersed was he in the explanation of some detail to his assistant, he did not notice the newcomers; but a slight sound made by their approach caused him to whirl on his heel with a startled exclamation. For an instant his eyes narrowed and his swarthy face flushed hotly; then he stepped forward.

"What do you want here?" he demanded rudely. "I never admit strangers to this building—you should have gone to the house."

CHAPTER V.

"WE ARE in something of a hurry, Mr. Brookes, and your servant directed us here," Sheriff Parker answered easily. "We've called on rather important business, and I would suggest that you see us in private." He glanced meaningly at the workman, who, after a single quick glance at the strangers, had resumed his tinkering with the 'plane.

Brookes hesitated for an instant, apparently upon the verge of ordering them all off the premises, but something in the little sheriff's calm gaze seemed to convince him that such a proceeding would be futile, for he finally shrugged slightly and moved toward a small, box-like compartment that had been built up in one corner of the great barn.

When they were all inside this cubbyhole of a place and the door was closed, Sheriff Parker, trusting to surprise to trap the inventor, came directly to the point.

"Mr. Brookes," he opened, in a sharp tone, "I am the sheriff of this county and I have come to arrest you for the abduction of Maxwell Larabee—there is my warrant." He pulled a folded document from his overcoat pocket and held it out.

Langdon Brookes made no move to take it, however. For a second or two he merely stared probingly at the three men in front of him—his face as expressionless as wax. Then he began to laugh mirthlessly.

"Larabee?" he repeated, with a lift of the eyebrows. "What Larabee? You're crazy, sheriff; I know no one of that name."

Sheriff Parker smiled faintly—Brookes certainly had sound nerves.

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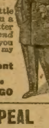

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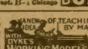

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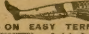

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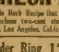

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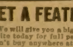

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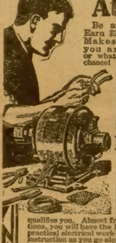

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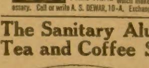

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"In that event," was his quiet retort, "I'll try to freshen your memory a little. Eva Stronsky has confessed and you are 'wanted' on a double charge. She believes that you killed her brother—Mike Stronsky."

This time the shot scored a bull's-eye. Brookes' swarthy features went the color of ashes and he staggered back a step or two. For a bit he seemed to contemplate flight; then, seeing the three men between him and the door, his hand suddenly dropped toward his hip pocket. Before he could draw his weapon, however, he found his wrist in the grip of the strongest fingers in that part of the State. There was a short, sharp tussle, and Big Jase stepped back with the revolver in his hand. Panting slightly, Brookes sank back against a huge coil of rope.

"So it was that —— girl, after all!" he bitterly exclaimed. "I feared that she'd give the show away sooner or later; but it was the only way I could get Larabee out of town. Too bad she didn't go instead of her brother—he was stanch; but he slipped when we hauled Larabee into the 'plane and fell over a hundred feet to that rock. It was no murder, gentlemen. Larabee can bear witness to that; he saw it all. He is well and unhurt, none the worse for his experience, I assure you, altho he's the first man ever lassoed from an aeroplane."

"So that was how you did it," Sheriff Parker commented. "I had guessed something of the sort. I am glad there was no murder, Brookes, and hope you can prove it. The facts seem to bear you out; Stronsky's terrible injuries and the marks on the rock all point to the sort of accident you mention. I suppose the body must have bounced to where it lay in the field. This kidnaping in itself is serious enough, whatever your motive. You'll have to come back to the city with us."

Langdon Brookes nodded grimly.

"Of course," he agreed, the hint of a strange smile at the corners of his mouth, "but we shall talk a little first. You're a clever man, Mr. Sheriff, very clever, if you don't mind me saying so, and you've reasoned things nicely; but you know the old saying of 'many a slip'. I'm afraid that you won't arrest me yet awhile."

As he spoke the last words, he stooped quickly and jerked a short-handled ax from behind the pile of rope.

"Don't move!" he warned, raising the keen-edged tool threateningly, as the sheriff and Jase would have sprung at him. "This business may yet be settled in a peaceable way, if you don't precipitate matters. Just at present, Mr. Sheriff, I happen to hold all the high cards in our little game."

Sheriff Parker smiled inscrutably. For the life of him he could not see what Brookes was driving at. There was but one door to the little room, and all three of the visitors were between that door and the cornered man; furthermore, they were all three armed with revolvers, against which the ax would prove worse than useless. For the moment, the sheriff was inclined to think that the inventor had suddenly gone mad.

"Come, come, Brookes," he said tolerantly, "take things easy, man. You can do nothing against us with that puny tool, and I have no desire to hurt you. Be reasonable. Don't make a bad matter worse by trying to fight your way against hopeless odds. Put down that ax and we'll discuss this little matter calmly."

The inventor laughed a bit hysterically. It was plain that he labored in the grip of some great excitement; the hands that held the little ax fairly shook as their owner confronted the sheriff.

"You think I'm mad, I suppose," he broke out, "but you'll see, presently. For the time, this little ax of mine is worth all your revolvers. See this rope?" He kicked the coil beside him at the point where one end of the rope disappeared thru a small slit in the wall. "Well, that's the ace in the hole, gentlemen. One little tap of this ax—it's very sharp, you see—and the proof of the kidnaping will fly off with the winds. To be brief, this rope is all that holds my balloon, out yonder, to earth; and Maxwell Larabee is in the balloon!"

"Good God!" Doctor Morse fell limply back against the door, while Sheriff Parker staggered as tho some one had struck him. Of the four men in the room Big Jase alone seemed to preserve his mental balance.

"Now, what do you say?" Langdon Brookes continued exultantly. "Who is the winner now, Mr. Sheriff? I prepared for every emergency, you see, and you haven't caught me napping. There's gas enough in that old silk bag to carry it a mile in the air and keep it there for two days, at least. Plenty of time for it to drift half across the country before it falls. Larabee is tied into the basket, one stroke of this ax will send him where you'll never find him. Now, perhaps, you'll be willing to talk business."

"What sort of business?"

Sheriff Parker snapped out the question explosively. Half mad as he believed the inventor to be, he knew that he must humor him to some extent if he wished to save Larabee from a terrible end. For the moment, he could not deny that the tables had been very neatly turned.

"Money," Brookes answered quickly. "You know why I did this thing to begin with—I want money, and if you'll get me $50,000 I shall be willing to take my chances. Send a note to Larabee's bankers to have the cash brought here and then give me one hour's start. That's all I ask of you. My little monoplane will carry me out of this cursed country for good and all. But first I must have money!"

"But how can we get it, man?" the sheriff argued, while he strove desperately to devise some way of getting the madman away from the rope. "Mr. Larabee's bankers will not turn over a small fortune to any one on my order. The thing is absurd."

"No; not so absurd as you think, perhaps." Seeing that the officer seemed disposed to listen to him, the inventor began to speak more quietly. "I've thought it all out, sheriff. I already have an order signed by Larabee himself—no matter how I got it—and all I want is a messenger whom the bank will have some reason to trust. We might make use of your man, there." He looked toward Jase.

Sheriff Parker shook his head.

"It would be useless," he declared. "Jase can neither read nor write and he cannot talk except by means of a sign language which no one can understand but myself. They'd never give him the money."

"They should do so," Brookes insisted, "on Larabee's personal and extremely urgent request. At any rate, we can try. The negro's dumbness makes it all the safer for me—he can't tell what he knows, you see. Suppose you direct him to take this note"—he pulled a small envelope from his pocket—"and deliver it, while the rest of you remain exactly where you are?"

"We'll try, if you wish," the sheriff answered, in a tone that made Doctor Morse look at him curiously, "but I wouldn't count on it too heavily."

He turned and made a number of strange signs to Big Jase, who nodded, took the note that was handed him, and left the room instantly.

"I'm glad to see you take things so philosophically," Langdon Brookes remarked, when the negro had gone. "I knew, of course, that my scheme was unbeatable. I had prepared for every possible contingency in the event of being found out before I had accomplished my purpose, but I was rather afraid that you might prove stubborn and force me to dispose of Larabee. Since he is the goose that lays the golden eggs I——"

He was interrupted by the muffled crack of a pistol shot, which came from somewhere outside, and for a second he stood dumfounded. Then with an angry shout he plunged toward the door.

Sheriff Parker made no effort to stop him. Instead, he let him pass as he wished and then turned to follow him outside the barn, while Doctor Morse brought up the rear. As they ran thru the open door and swung round the corner of the building, the three men were just in time to see the great balloon, which had been tugging at its anchor so stoutly only a little while before, settle slowly to the ground at the edge of the grove. A few paces away, showing every tooth in his head in a tremendous grin, Big Jase was standing with a revolver in his hand. As Brookes, too intent upon the wrecked balloon to have eyes for anything else, passed him, the negro stuck out his foot and tripped him up; then he sprang forward and plucked the ax from the inventor's fingers.

Between them, Sheriff Parker and the coroner lifted Maxwell Larabee from the basket of the balloon and unbound him. Tho very pale and suffering considerably from shock, the prisoner was uninjured, and when he saw this the sheriff could not conceal his pleasure.

"You're all right now, Mr. Larabee," he declared, with a satisfied chuckle, "but I must admit it was touch and go for a minute. I felt sure that a pistol ball would let the gas out of that big bag and bring it down without harming you. And Jase, as usual, obeyed orders immediately."

The End.

* * *

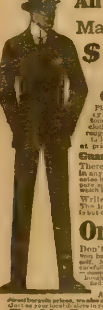
A Steady Aim.

John Blevins was the most bashful lad in a Kansas village. For three years he had been keeping company with Sallie Jaimes, but he could not bring his courage up to the popping point. One Sunday night, as John was leaving the front yard of his inamorata he encountered the old man, who had grown to chafe under the diffidence of his daughter's sweetheart.

"Look-ee here, John," exclaimed paterfamilias. "You have been coming to see my daughter for several years now, and I want to know what your intentions are."

"W-w-well, s-s-sir," stammered John, "I am aiming to m-marry her."

"Aiming!" snorted the old man. "Well, don't you think it about time that you fired?"



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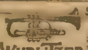

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Swamp-Root is not recommended for everything but if you suffer from annoying bladder troubles, frequently passing water night and day, smarting or irritation in passing, brick-dust or sediment, headache, backache, lame back, dizziness, poor digestion, sleeplessness, nervousness, heart disturbance due to bad kidney trouble, skin eruptions from bad blood, neuralgia, rheumatism, lumbago, bloating, irritability, worn-out feeling, lack of ambition, may be loss of flesh or sallow complexion, kidney trouble in its worst form may be stealing upon you.

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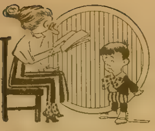


Teacher—"Billy, spell 'wrong.'"

B[illegible]

Teacher—"That's wrong."

Billy—"That's what you asked me to spell"

* * *

Her System.

Cornelius Vanderbilt said, in a recent argument on preparedness.

"They who would rely on a volunteer militia instead of a conscript army know as little about real preparedness as the lady about tobacco.

"'Why,' said the lady, 'it's all nonsense to say a woman can't buy her husband's cigars. As for me, I never have the least difficulty.'

"[illegible] What's your system?' she was asked.

"'I just take along a sample stump,' she said, 'and there's never the least trouble about matching the shade'"

Credit and Cash.

Many a Southern darky's mind is stored with bits of philosophy that are frequently as true as they are quaint. Here is an instance

One wintry day," says a Washington man, "I met an old darky in rags plodding along. The cold wind beat the many holes in his tattered garments. Yet, despite his evident poverty, he was carrying a whole side of bacon on his shoulder

"'Uncle,' I asked, 'why didn't you spend your money on a warm coat instead of on all that bacon?'

'Well, suh," said the old man, gravely, 'when I asks my back for credit I gits it.' Then, patting his stomach, he added

"'But dis heah, suh, dis heah always calls for cash.'"

* * *

Not Convinced.

Robbie's first experience of a concert hall was a great mammoth entertainment in aid of a patriotic fund. The most celebrated soprano of the day was engaged in singing to the accompaniment of a famous orchestra when Robbie and family arrived.

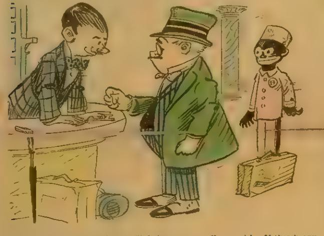
The small boy at once became interested in the gesticulations of the conductor

'Mother, why is that man shaking his stick at the lady?" he asked

"Hush, dear; he is not shaking his stick at her."

But Robbie was not convinced

"Then what is she screaming for?



The Night Clerk—"I think you'll find your room all you wish. If there's anything else you desire two rings will bring the chambermaid."

Mr Timseed—"Say! I've fixed the head waiter. I've tipped the porter and I've sweetened the bell hop, but I'll sleep on the floor before I buy jewelry for the chambermaid."

Mary Misunderstood.

Salt-boiled beef was the main item on the luncheon menu, and the flavor of this particular joint was so odd that the family laid down their knives and forks in unison

"General" Mary Jane was sent for

"There is something wrong with this beef, Mary," said the mistress of the house "Did you soak it as I told you?"

"Oh, yes, mum," said the maid-of-all work brightly. "I soaped it well all round"

Ignorance of the Bible.

Willis—"Do you think a knowledge of the Bible is necessary for a business man nowadays?"

Gillis—"Yes, indeed, ignorance of it cost Bump, the mail order man, a pretty penny last week. Some fellow copied a a lot of names out of Chronicles and sold it to Bump as a mailing list and Bump sent out circulars of his new safety razor to half a hundred patriarchs of the Old Testament before he got wise."

J[illegible]

All the Same.

It was an intensely cold morning and the city train was packed. A crusty old gentleman with his back to the engine preferred the window down for ventilation," whilst a wheezy individual facing the window persisted in pulling it up again, as he hated "these beastly east winds."

Altho it was cold, words became very hot.

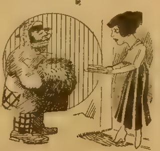
"I can't stand this stuffy herring box!" chortled the crusty man, tugging the strap and letting the window drop for the fourth time.

"Nor I these Siberian blasts that only convicts could stand," rejoined the wheezer "Don't you know its an old adage that 'when the wind is in the east 'tis neither fit for me nor you'?"

"Ha, ha," laughed the crusty man, appealing to the passengers to laugh also. "Here's a man that does not know the old proverb. Why, sir, the last words are 'man nor beast.'"

"Well, there's no difference in what I said," chuckled the wheezer, as the passengers roared in chorus.

* * *



Tramp—"Lady, will yer gimme a pie, please?"

Mrs. Justwed—"I haven't but one, and I'm saving that for my husband!"

Tramp—"Yes'm! He said if I'd get it he'd give me a quarter."

* * *

A Natural Mistake.

"Yes," he said, "we must cut down and economize. I've brought home a sample bottle of very cheap claret, which I think I shall have to drink in future'

"Good!" she responded "And I have made a pint of furniture polish from an old recipe, ever so cheaply"

It was a few days afterward that the breeze arose.

"How was I to know," he stormed, "that you'd put your furniture polish into a wine bottle? Great wonder I'm not poisoned!"

"And how was I to know I was polishing the table with your old claret?" she fired back. "Anyhow, it answered very well, and when you drank the furniture polish you said it was very good wine for the price!"

* * *

The New Hotel.

An American visiting Dublin told some startling stories of the height of New York skyscrapers. An Irishman stood it as long as he could and then asked:

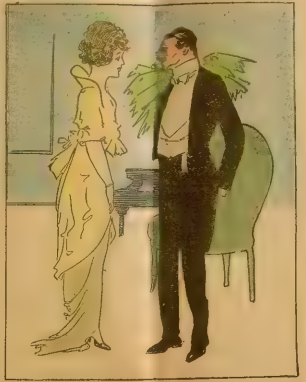
"Ye haven't seen our newest hotel, have ye?

The American thought not.

"Well," said the Irishman, "it's so tall that we had to put the two top stories on hinges."

"What for?" asked the American.

"So we could let 'em down till the moon went by," said Pat.



He—"So she has been married and divorced? A grass widow!"
She—"Married and divorced four times!"
He—"Ah! A bale of hay!"

The Druggist's Fault.

Belinda was beautiful—so beautiful! And for that same beauty Brown married her

It didn't take him long to discover that behind her beauty lay very little brain. She was an absolute duffer at cooking.

"Joseph, dear," she cooed one evening when he came home from business, "I have made you such a lovely rice pudding for your supper!"

"Thank you, dear!" replied Joseph, meekly, hoping for the best.

"I was going to make some sponge cake, too," she went on, "but my plans were upset."

"Were they, dear?" asked Joseph, cheering up at his narrow escape. "What was the trouble?"

"It was all the druggist's fault!" she pouted. "He forgot to send the sponges I ordered this morning!"

* * *

MAKES THEM HAPPY.

'Tis said one can't buy happiness;
  Yet everybody knows
That women buy a lot of it
  When buying pretty clothes.

A Mystery.

"Who was that lady I saw yer [illegible] at the ball game, Jimmy?"

"That was our schoolteacher. I was tryin' to make her understand how the game is played, but it wasn't any use. Gee! I don't see how she ever got to be a schoolteacher."

* * *

The Envious One.

Customer—I—haw'—see the bally Germans have received a big check."

Tailor—"Er—yes, sir. Lucky Germans"

A Rise in Temperature.

Sister Nancy was going the round of the ward in the big hospital for wounded [illegible], examining them [illegible] over each bed and taking temperatures.

Reaching the side of one hero, in whose mouth she had left the thermometer a minute ago, she was horrified to find, on withdrawing it, that it registered 120, altho only an hour ago the patient was normal. Swiftly she summoned the house doctor, but he, on arriving was as seriously perplexed, as there was nothing in the patient's condition to account for the sudden rise.

"Look here," he said to the soldier, "have you dropped this thermometer, or been fooling about with it?"

"No, sir. Only been stirring my tea with it!"

* * *

More Than Plenty.

"What do you mean by coming home without a drop of milk in the pail?" demanded the indignant farmer of his new odd job man. "Do you mean to say the cow wouldn't give any?"

"No," said the man. "She gave plenty of milk and one kick."

Well Recommended.

The well-dressed stranger stepped into the drug store and, passing [illegible] boy who usually attended to casual customers, approached the proprietor, who was arranging some goods in the showcase.

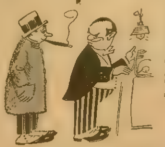
"Mr. C——, I presume?" he remarked, pleasantly, and the druggist turned and bowed gravely. "I have heard my friend, Mr. Quorn, speak of you often," said the brisk man. "He told me if ever I needed anything in this line to come to you. He spoke of you as a man on whom one could rely with perfect confidence, who had only the best of everything and with whom it was always a pleasure to deal."

"Mr. Quorn is very kind," answered the other, beaming with gratification. What can I do for you this morning?"

"Well—er—this morning, as it happens' said the stranger, with just a little briskness, "this morning I should like, if you will allow me, to consult your directory

"Certainly," was the calm reply. "We also have a good selection of one and two-cent stamps as well as railway time tables, if you need anything of that kind"

* * *



Jones "What's the Oh J[illegible] silver mine stock selling for now

Broker—"We just sold the last ten rolls of it for wall paper.

* * *

He Wondered.

They were sitting close together in the parlor.

He—'I gave you that parrot as a birthday present, did I not, [illegible]

She—Yes, but surely, Albert, you are not going to speak of your gifts as if [illegible]"

He—"It was young and could not speak at the time?"

[illegible] increasing wonder, "and it has never been out of this parlor

He—'There are no other young ladies' in this house?"

She—"No; there are not."

He—"Then, why—why when I kissed your photograph in the album while waiting for you, did that wretched bird imitate your voice, and say, 'Don't do that, Charlie; please, don't!'"

* * *

Untempted.

He was an idle Irish boy, but he had the Irishman's ready wit. He had shipped board a man-of-war, where he annoyed the boatswain by his laziness. Seeing him on the maintop one morning gazing idly [illegible] the [illegible] to him

"Come down out of that, ye rashcal! Come down out of that, an' Oi'll give yez a dozen whacks wid me rope!

"Faith, sorr," replied the boy, 'Oi wouldn't come if ye offered me two dozen'"

What Miranda Said

Mrs West was on the street car one day when one of the passengers suffered an accident. The conductor took the names of the witnesses, but Mrs. West to avoid being summoned to court, gave a fictitious name and address

The next morning the colored cook ventured the remark that "that man must 'a' been hurt mighty bad yesterday."

"Oh, were you on the car, Miranda?" asked her mistress. "I didn't see you"

"Yaas'm, I was settin' right behind you."

"Well, Miranda, I hope they didn't get your name, for I couldn't spare you to go to court."

"Oh, no'm; I didn't give 'em my right name. They'll never find me."

"What did you tell them?" asked Mrs West, wondering how far Miranda's imagination had led her

Well'm, I heard you s[illegible] Mrs Hawkins so I sez 'Miss Hawkins'

* * *

Just What He Meant.

The following is one of the best of the many good stories told of Sir Herbert Tree

Once, during the rehearsal of a certain play, Sir Herbert asked a very young and by no means brilliant actor, who fancied himself greatly, to "step back a little." The actor did so and Tree went on rehearsing. A little later the famous manager repeated his request and the youth obeyed again

Shortly afterward Tree once more asked him to "step a little farther back"

"But if I do," complained the youthful one, ruefully, "I shall be completely off the stage"

"Yes," answered Tree, quietly, "that's right."

Not Old Hands.

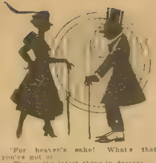
A married couple were touring in Sicily. At a distance from one of the large towns, the wife said

"Think, Albert, if the brigands should come now and take me from you!"

'Impossible, my dear"

'But supposing they did come and carry me away, what would you say?"

"I should say," replied her husband, "that the brigands were new at the business—that's all"



"For heaven's sake! What's that you've got on

This is the latest thing in dresses

"You mean you are the latest thing in dresses! I've been waiting for you four hours al[illegible]

* * *

Not the Cow.

Some years ago the commanding officer of a military station gave orders that no one should be allowed to step [illegible]r the grass where the cow was pastured. The next day the General's wife, wishing to take a short cut, started to walk from one path to another

No one to pass here, madam," said the sentry

The lady drew herself up. "Do you know who I am?" she demanded

No, madam,' replied the impassive soldier. "I do not know who you are But I know you are not the General's cow and nobody else is permitted to walk on this grass

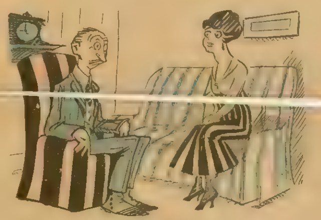
The Highest Form.

A teacher in the primary department had been holding forth on the three great divisions of nature—the animal, the vegetable, the mineral. When she had finished she put this question

"Who can tell me what is the highest form of animal life?"

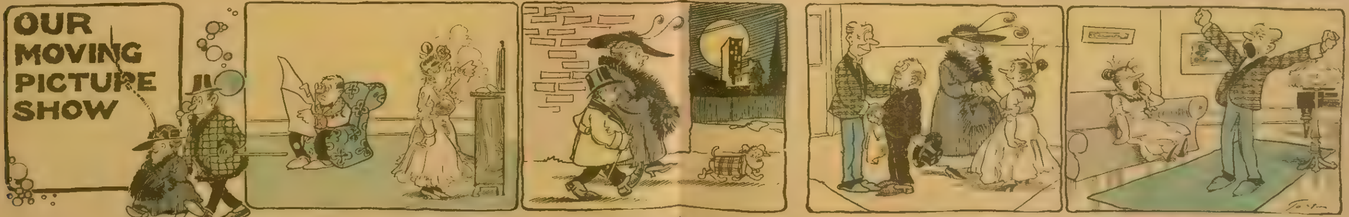
A little girl bounded from her seat and with the certainty of being right exclaimed:

"The giraff[illegible]



Percy—"I wish I could see myself as others see me'
Ethel—"My hero! You have nerve enough to f[illegible]e a firing squad at sunrise

THE FEELING WAS MUTUAL



Mrs. Brown—"We have to call on the Smiths this evening How I hate it

Mr Brown—"I'll have to listen to Smith's bunk till midnight, I s'pose"

Mrs. Brown—"They are the worst boobs, I know."

Mr. Brown—"We must endure it, tho, because it pleases them so to have us come."

Mrs. Brown (three hours later)—"We [illegible] enjoyed ourselves immensely, my dear'

Mrs Smith—'Really, must you go so soon

Mr. Brown—'This has been the time of my life, old boy'

Mr. Smith—"Don't be such a stranger after this This has been such a treat to us''

Mrs Smith—"Thank heavens, alone at last! I thought the simps would never go''

Mr Smith 'Wow' What a relief' I wish those pests would let us alone' Now I s'pose we'll have to return their call! What a nuisance'

A Satisfactory Explanation.

Phairson MacPherson was a Scotsman. Also, he was a coal merchant. Also, he was in love. His lassie was a sensible lass, and she knew him to be the richest man in the town. But she wanted to be quite sure that he had come by all his money honestly before she decided to marry him.

"How is it that ye quote the lowest prices in the toon, and make reductions on them for yer freens and yet ye make such enormous profits?" she asked.

"Weel, it's this way," explained Phairson MacPherson, in an undertone. "And ye'll be no tellin' any one aboot it, will ye? Ye see, I knock off twa shillings a ton because a customer is a freen o' mine, and then I knock off two hundredweight a ton because I'm a freen o' his!"

And she married him without delay.

* * *

Wise Little Woman.

Mabel watched Arthur anxiously as he poured the milk on his breakfast porridge and tasted a spoonful.

"Do you notice anything about the milk this morning, dear?" she asked with elaborate carelessness.

"Yes," replied her husband, slowly. "I do, now you mention it. It tastes like—there's something—it's more—er— "

"That's right!" exclaimed the young wife triumphantly. "Our last milk was so poor and thin that four days ago I tried a new dairyman. And he has such splendid milk, Arthur, that I took in enough for a whole fortnight! I've been wondering every morning when you'd notice it!"

PICTURE No. 1.

PICTURE No. 2.

PICTURE No. 3.

PICTURE No. 4.

PICTURE No. 5.

PICTURE No. 6.

PICTURE No. 7.

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of 24 easy and interesting pictures. You are to give each one of these pictures a name (or title). The Catalog of Titles which we furnish you contains all of the titles you can use, and you just go thru this list and pick out those titles that fit the pictures best, then enter the titles in the Reply Book, which also permits you to make as many as three answers to each picture.

$4,000.00 IN CASH PRIZES

1st
$1,000.00

2nd
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3rd
$ 500.00

4th
$ 250.00

5th
$ 125.00

6th
$ 75.00

7th
$ 50.00

504 other big CASH prizes, totaling in all, $4,000.00. Cash

Full prizes paid all final tying contestants.

EVERY ONE, EVERYWHERE, CAN PLAY

this simple, easy game. Plenty of time if you start now. Suppose a picture showed you a man fishing. Well, you would just turn to the letter "F" in the Catalog (which is alphabetically arranged) and look for some title beginning with "Fishing." That's the way you find titles in the Catalog to fit the pictures. Think up what sort of a title would fit a picture, and then go thru this Catalog and see if it is there. If not, then you know you have not selected the **BEST** title to it, and you must hunt again.

BUT, REMEMBER THIS, THE CATALOG CONTAINS ALL THE BEST TITLES TO THE PICTURES—YOU SIMPLY PICK THEM OUT.

The 24 pictures shown on this page have been greatly reduced in size because we have not the space to show them the regular size. Really, the pictures that you get are more than three times as large, which makes it very easy for you to look them over.

50 CENTS

BRINGS YOU THE COMPLETE HOME PICTUREGAME OUTFIT, CONSISTING OF—ALL THE 24 PICTURES, CATALOG OF TITLES, REPLY BOOK AND A ONE YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION TO THE FARMING BUSINESS.

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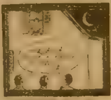
SEND US THE SPECIAL OFFER COUPON BELOW WITH 50 CENTS TODAY—GET THE COMPLETE HOME PICTUREGAME OUTFIT AND SUBSCRIPTION, AND START AFTER YOUR SHARE OF THE $4,000.00 CASH. YOU SHOULD EASILY WIN.


PICTURE No. 16.

PICTURE No. 17.

The Farming Business

is conducting this Picturegame, but every one can enter and play. The rules showing how you can compete expenselessly will be sent to any one on request.

The
FARMING
BUSINESS

PICTURE No. 18.

THE FARMING BUSINESS IS A SPLENDID WEEKLY MAGAZINE, WITH GOOD STORIES, WONDERFUL FEATURES, NEW INVENTIONS, PLENTY OF ILLUSTRATIONS, AND IS REALLY A MAGAZINE THAT SHOULD BE IN EVERY HOME.

PICTURE No. 19.

PICTURE No. 20.

PICTURE No. 21.

PICTURE No. 22.

PICTURE No. 23.

PICTURE No. 24.

SEND IN THIS ORDER FORM TODAY

SPECIAL OFFER COUPON

Picturegame Editor,
The Farming Business, Chicago, Ill.

I enclose 50 cents for which send me your magazine for one year, and as a gift send me your Complete Picturegame Outfit, consisting of all 24 pictures, Catalog of Titles and Reply Book. I am going to try to win my share of the $4,000.00 Cash.

Name .....

R. F. D. ...... Street

P. O. ...... State ..

An Island Vendetta.

(Continued From Page 8.)

Matt gave a whoop of excitement and, turning, he found Ruth quite as thrilled in her quiet way as himself. Impulsively he grasped her hand and squeezed it. She did not seem to observe the unconscious liberty, as spontaneous as it was expressive of his unspoken emotions.

"They will lay to this evening," he observed, studying the vessel thru half-closed eyes. "Probably they'll wait until morning to send a boat ashore. This reminds me—" he turned toward her with a teasing light in his eyes—"your premonitions of never leaving the island—now what's to become of them? This must be the—Why—what's the matter!"

She had drawn her hand away and stood silent and shrinking. The joy was gone from her face, and in its place was sadness—sadness as deep and unmistakable as it was unexpected. The man was startled at the change.

"I forgot—" she faltered; then, as if mastering herself by a strong effort of the will: "It is nothing—nothing. I—I must ask to be alone."

She stumbled blindly toward the door, he regarding her in open-mouthed dismay. Before entering, she hesitated, then turned.

"Good night," she said tremulously, holding out her hand. "I am glad—our last day on the island was like this. It has helped, after all—your being here. Good night."

Bellamy stood gazing at the door thru which she had disappeared. She was tired and unnerved, no doubt, but even so he was unable to account for her manner. If he was not mistaken, something like a sob had escaped her as she entered. Almost, her words had made him feel that he would never see her again. Which was absurd, considering that they were to sail away together the next day.

A sullen gray mist hung over the island the following morning. A stiff breeze and choppy sea made it doubtful in Bellamy's judgment whether an attempt would be made at once to send a boat ashore. The yacht had dropped anchor about a mile away, but was almost invisible thru the fog.

Matt had risen early, impelled by the exciting prospect of a change in his life which he had been more than half reconciled never to expect. Ruth had not put in her appearance, and he had the gloomy world to himself.

Presently he knocked together a breakfast in the living-room, and half an hour later ate his part alone, without calling her; then he strolled out for another examination of the prospect.

A fine, drizzling rain had commenced to fall and the wind had risen. Evidently the new arrivals were unwilling to risk the crossing from vessel to shore under such unfavorable conditions. There seemed every chance that the storm would increase, rather than diminish; so the leave-taking might have to be postponed until tomorrow.

Becoming uneasy at length regarding the nonappearance of Ruth Leavering, Matt ventured to call once or twice in a low tone, but received no answer.

She might be ill. The adventures of the day before could easily have resulted in a breakdown. Under the spur of necessity, it might be possible to get in communication with the vessel and make those on board understand that assistance was needed.

He knocked loudly on her door. There was no response. Then a panic seized him. Casting scruples to the wind in his anxiety, he tried the fastening. It was unlocked. A premonition of disaster held him for a brief instant on the threshold, then he flung the door open, entering the sacred apartment for the first time.

For a full minute he stood motionless, staring about the little boudoir. Everything had been left in perfect order. The bed was undisturbed; it had not been occupied. Mrs. Leavering had stolen forth in the night.

His eyes fell almost at once upon an envelope propped against the inkstand of her writing desk. It was addressed in a clear feminine hand: "For Mr. Bellamy."

Seizing it, he stared at the superscription, impatient, yet dreading to open it.

He drew forth the inclosure, noting as an odd circumstance that the paper had a soiled and crumpled appearance. A supply of fresh stationery lay at hand on the desk, and the envelope itself was crisp and new. But the folded sheet within looked as if it had been half crumpled and then straightened out.

With dread he had opened the letter; with fixed attention that seared each word deep in his memory, he read the first few lines; and the paper dropped from his nerveless fingers while the reading of it was half unfinished.

This mysterious story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

How Sallie Helped.

Betty, the secretary of our club, has had a pretty love story. It began in a rainstorm. When the rain was pelting down its liveliest Betty came into the street from an elevated road station. At the bottom of the steps stood a boy selling flowers. He had only two roses left, glorious, half-blown pink ones.

"I'll have those roses, if you please," said Betty. And, "I'll have those roses, if you please," said another voice at the same time. The other voice belonged to a man. He was a young man, and when Betty looked up and he looked down, both smiled. Despite the dampness of his clothes the boy smiled, too.

"Well," he said, "which of you is goin' to have 'em?"

"You," said Betty. "You spoke first."

"No, you. I think you did," said the young man.

The boy, being a diplomat as well as a flower seller, suggested that they "divvy up."

"Why not?" said the man. "I want my roses for a friend who is ill, and she can't smell but one rose at a time, now, can she?"

"I suppose not," said Betty. "I also want my roses for a friend who is ill, and she can't smell but one rose at a time."

So they "divvied up." They left the station together, and since their ways lay in the same direction, they walked together for three blocks. Presently both turned into the same side street and both stopped at the same house in the middle of the block, and both rang the bell of the same flat.

"Don't tell me it is Sallie Miller that you are bringing that rose to," said Betty, incredulously.

"Sure it is," said he. "And don't tell me it is Sallie that you are bringing your rose to."

"Sure it is," said Betty.

So they climbed the stairs together.

"Won't Sallie be surprised to see us coming together?" said Betty. Sallie was surprised.

"I didn't know that you two knew each other," she said.

"We don't—we didn't" said Betty. Then they told the story of the roses.

Sallie liked the roses, but, being a sympathetic soul, she liked the story better. "I am so glad," she said. "You must both come again on Wednesday at this same time."

They went away together. Their talk was mostly of Sallie. Each said how wonderful it was that the other knew Sallie. At the corner they separated.

"I go this way," said Betty. "And I that," said he. "I hope we will meet again—at Sallie's," said Betty.

Of course they met—at Sallie's. Their engagement is now six months old. They will be married soon.

* * *

Beetle Loves Fire.

The remarkable power of withstanding heat possessed by certain lizards, which gave rise to the legend of the salamander—a creature said actually to live in fire—is not confined to the reptile family. Professor Thomson has recently given particulars of a race of Australian beetles which seem, to a large extent, to be fireproof.

"It is said," he writes, according to an exchange, "that when a bush fire is raging certain Buprestid beetles are attracted from a distance, perhaps by the scent, and fly straight into the fire, alighting and running about on the hot, steaming branches, and sometimes even over the parts that are glowing red, yet without injury.

"Mr. H. M. Giles speaks of it as 'one of the most agile species known to me, and as alert and active as an eagle.' It is probable that the larvae feed on the half-burnt roots of the shrubs. The remarkable habit is paralleled among a number of 'fire bug' beetles which lay their eggs in burnt timber, probably thus insuring, as Professor Poulton suggests, 'some chemical or physical advantage in the larval food.'"

* * *

Occasionally you can raise trouble with a cake of yeast.

URIC ACID

Does Not Cause Rheumatism

Furthermore, I claim that Uric Acid is a NATURAL and NECESSARY constituent of the blood. That without it we could not live! Strange statement? Yes—to you, because you have always been told differently.

But my Book just published tells you the real truth about Rheumatism. Tells what actually DOES cause it, and how it is now being successfully treated by entirely new, advanced, scientific methods.

This Book is the result of my 20 years of study and experimentation in this disease. One prominent physician says of it: "Intensely interesting and instructive—surely a valuable Thesis."

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[illegible] whether you want to keep it on our amazing [illegible] offer.

In ordering ring, cut a strip of heavy paper so that ends exactly meet around second joint of finger. Send strip to us with order coupon. Do it today—sure.

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Jewelry Dept. 2
39th & Wentworth Ave., Chicago

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39th & Wentworth Ave., Chicago

Send Ring No. 9G ..... Size enclosed strip paper. If satisfactory after examination, I will pay [illegible] and balance of price quoted at rate of [illegible] per month. Otherwise I will return ring [illegible]

Name
Address

Boys! Start to Earn Xmas Money

Every boy likes to have money for Christmas. The up-to-date boy begins in the fall to earn money so that he has it when Christmas comes. Our agents earn from $1.00 to $5.00 a week selling The Saturday Blade, Chicago Ledger, Farming Business and Lone Scout. People in every town know our great papers and they want some one to buy the papers from each week. We send the papers all in one bundle so that they come to you at one time, on Friday. You have a paper to sell to every man, woman or boy. Easy to sell and build up a route of steady customers. You make a cash profit on every paper you sell. You can't lose. You don't send us any money until you sell the papers.

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Each active agent for our papers is appointed a Lone Scout by Chief Totem of the Lone Scouts of America, who sends badge and Certificate of Membership and the booklet of instructions in this great organization. It is easy to get started, but each one should hurry, for the agencies are being grabbed up quickly by boys. Just fill out the blank below and we will send you a complete agent's outfit. We tell you how to get the customers and how to make out your reports.

W. D. BOYCE CO., 512 NORTH DEARBORN STREET, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

I accept the agency for your 4 papers. Send me as many copies of each as you think I can sell the first week. I will be pleased to receive my Certificate of Membership in the Lone Scouts and badge and booklet of instructions from Chief Totem FREE. Also tell me how to get the valuable premiums.

Name
Street or R. F. D. No.
Town State C. L.

FREE [illegible] Oaks Magic Co., 360, Oshkosh, Wis.

MONEY Made quickly by smart men. I. Artol Co., 115 Nassau St., NY

Resourceful.

A Southern lady who has met with financial reverses recently moved to the country in order to economize. She engaged a little colored boy in the neighborhood to assist her at odd times about the house. Sam was so much pleased with his employment that he was anxious to become a permanent member of the little household.

"Mis' Alice," he began one day, "don't you-all ever git skeered in dis big house, jus' by yousef?"

"Why, yes, Sam," the lady admitted, "it is lonely at times. I have thought of having some one about when my husband has to go away."

"Well," ventured Sam again, "I jus' thought you might like to know dat I's a candidate fo' de position ob protector in case you should decide to employ some one."

"Why, Sam," asked the lady, laughing, 'what could you do to help me if robbers happened to break in some dark night?"

Sam was puzzled for a moment, but presently he had an inspiration.

"Well, Mis' Alice," he said proudly, "dah's one thing dat I could do in case you was visited by unwelcome intruders: I could light de lantern and show you-all which way to run!"

Classified Want Ads

Classified Want Ad Information

The rate for one insertion in Chicago Ledger and one insertion in The Saturday Blade is 30 cents a word, minimum 14 words, less 3% for cash. Each initial and group of figures is counted as a word, and the name and address are also counted. This is the minimum rate; neither more nor less is charged, irrespective of size of ad or number of insertions. An ad may appear in both publications of the same week, or in the Blade of one week and the Ledger of the next

W. D. BOYCE CO., Publisher, 500 N. Dearborn St. CHICAGO, ILL.

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$1,000.00 FOR YOUR NEXT 100 DAYS, SPOT Cash. New money-making inventions for agents, general agents, managers. Recently invented. 1,000,000 already sold; 200 more salesmen wanted at once. Amazing automatic Compressed Air Washing Machine. Washes tub of clothes in six minutes. No cranks to turn or levers to push—no rubbing. Works like magic. Price only $1.50—Makes sale at every house; 200% profit. L. Palmer, Glen Allen, Ala., put out on trial 108 machines. Sold 107. Profit, $107.00. Write today. Wendell Co., 1101 Oak St., Leipsic, O.

TRAVELING SALESMEN WANTED—EXPErience unnecessary. Earn big pay while you learn at home during spare time. Only eight weeks required. Hundreds of good positions open. Write today for large list of openings and testimonials from hundreds of students we have placed in positions paying $100 to $500 per month. Address nearest office Dept. B-37, National Salesmen Training Ass'n. Chicago New York San Francisco.

SALESMEN MAKE BIG MONEY SELLING our punchboard deals. Behrend Bros., 4347 Adams St., Chicago.

AGENTS WANTED

AMAZING, NEW INVENTION. MARVELous adding machine. Retails $7.50. Adds, subtracts, multiplies. Does work of $200 machine. Five-year guarantee. Offices, stores, factories buy from one to dozen. Enormous demand. Every demonstration sells. Write quick for trial offer and protected territory. Dept. B, Calculator Corporation, Grand Rapids, Mich.

WOULD $150 MONTHLY AND AN AUTO OF your own to travel in as general agent, handling remarkable sellers, King Lightning Pipe Vulcanizers, Winger Ride E. Z. Shock Absorber, and King Anti-Thief Combination Switch Lock, guaranteed thief proof, interest you? Then address U. S. Mfg. Co., Dept. 101, Wolcott, Ind.

WHO WANTS TO MAKE MORE MONEY selling brushes that every household needs? Special method of gaining entrance to demonstrate. Fuller Sanitary [illegible] brushes are [illegible] advertised—largest output—best terms and prices—Western distributing stations. Your territory is valuable. Write Fuller Brush Company, Hartford, Conn. Rock Island, Ill.

HERE'S A SURE MONEY-MAKING PROPOsition. Big profit selling Dr. Scott's Magnetic Corset. Relieves backache. The field is yours (not sold in stores). Exclusive territory given. Write for catalog of specialties. Liberal proposition. Est. 1878. Free—sample cake of soap. Pall Mall Electric Co., 128 W. 34 St., N. Y.

BIG TEXTILE MILLS WANT AMBITIOUS men and women everywhere to show latest dress fabrics, neckwear, hosiery, underwear, and sweaters. 400 styles. Easy sales. Values beat stores. Many making over $30 weekly. All or spare time. Complete sample outfit starts you. Steadfast Mills, 18 Remsen St., Cohoes, N. Y.

MAN OR WOMAN OF GOOD CHARACTER in each town to distribute free goods as advertising. Experience unnecessary. References required. $15 a week to start. Address Hudson King & Co., 3 South Clinton St., Chicago.

LARGE MANUFACTURER WANTS AGENTS to sell Aerco Raincoats. Litte earned $90 in four days; Jeff earned $100 in six days. We deliver and collect. 1916 Raincoat free. Act immediately. American European Raincoat Co., Desk B, 175 E. Broadway, New York.

GET DAVIS' LATEST XMAS PROPOSITION. Best yet. $15.00 daily a cinch. No matter how many times you have answered my advertisements in the last 20 years, write again. Hurry. E. M. Davis, Dept. 509, 900 Lake St., Chicago.

AGENTS—PAIR SILK HOSE FREE. STATE size and color. Beautiful line direct from mill. Good profits. Write today. Triplewear Mills, Dept. F, 112 So. 13th St., Philadelphia, Pa.

AGENTS—200 PER CENT PROFIT. WONderful little article. Something new; sells like wildfire. Carry right in pocket. Write at once for free sample. E. M. Feltman, Sales Mgr., 9554 3rd St., Cincinnati, Ohio

SUIT $3.75, PANTS $1.00, MADE TO measure. For even a better offer than this write and ask for free samples and styles. Knickerbocker Tailoring Co., Dept. 514, Chicago, Ill.

LARGE MANUFACTURER WANTS REPREsentatives to sell shirts, underwear, hosiery, dresses, waists, skirts, direct to homes. Write for free samples. Madison Mills, 586 Broadway, New York City

EXCLUSIVE SALES AGENT WANTED IN every county. Position worth $750 to $2,000 yearly. We specially train our agents. Have us show you. Novelty Cutlery Co., 123 Bar St., Canton, Ohio.

AGENTS—SELL RELIABLE CUSTOM MADE raincoats. Big commission. Complete sample line free. Temple Raincoat Co., Box 61 Templeton, Mass.

HUSTLERS—$20 TO $30 MADE WEEKLY distributing circulars, samples, tacking signs, etc. Advertisers National Agency, Dept. B 60, Chicago.

AGENTS—I'VE A NEW SOAP GAME that's a dandy. New stuff, 100% profits. Sample and full layout free. Write quick. Lacassian Co., Dept. 21, St. Louis, Mo.

RELIABLE AGENT WANTED. MARVELous new sickness, accident, death insurance. Box 331-A, Chicago.

SHORT STORIES WANTED

WRITERS!—STORIES, POEMS, PLAYS, etc., are wanted for publication. Literary Bureau, B4, Hannibal, Mo.

HELP WANTED

THOUSANDS MEN AND WOMEN WANTED for Government jobs. $75.00 month. Steady work. Short hours. Common education sufficient. Write immediately for free list positions now obtainable. Franklin Institute, Dep't R 30, Rochester, N. Y.

WANTED—BY A RELIABLE HOUSE, MEN, women, young, old, to address envelopes at home. All or spare time. We mean business. Dime for particulars. Hanx Specialty Co., Roseville, Illinois.

LADY OR GENTLEMAN TO TRAVEL FOR old-established firm. No canvassing. Staple line. $18 weekly, pursuant to contract. Expenses advanced. G. K. Nichols, Philadelphia, Pa. Pepper Bldg.

EVERY READER OF THE LEDGER OUGHT to read these ads. Every week splendid chances to make money—to better yourself—to buy, sell or exchange goods or services, are offered here.

OVER $2 DAILY EASILY EARNED KNITting at home. Auto-Knitters furnished on time. Send 2c stamp. Dept. 78, Auto Knitter Co., 147 Franklin St., Buffalo, N. Y.

WANTED—MEN TO BECOME CHAUFfeurs. $18 week. [illegible] Franklin Institute, Dept [illegible], Rochester, N. Y.

$49.28 WEEKLY EASILY MADE. PARTICulars for stamp. Address Gorden Mack, [illegible] Stephens Church, Va.

$25 WEEKLY COLLECTING NAMES AND addresses. Send stamp. Superba Co., W52, Baltimore, Md.

MALE HELP WANTED

GOVERNMENT POSITIONS ARE DESIRable however obtained. But schools are not all alike. My Washington Civil Service School alone gives a bond guaranteeing the student's success or his money back—and thus shows its confidence in its system of correspondence coaching for Government appointments. Look into it before you act. Write for free booklet FP, containing the information you need about positions and examinations. Mention place wanted. Earl Hopkins, 1034 Marden Bldg., Washington, D. C.

BE A FINGER PRINT EXPERT—$25 TO $50 a week in this new and fascinating profession. Write—find out how you can learn at home to supply the big demand for finger print experts in banks, big factories, detective agencies, etc. Special limited offer—write while it lasts. Evans University, Finger Print Dept., Room 5018, 1810 Wilson Ave., Chicago, Ill.

GOVERNMENT RAILWAY MAIL, POST OFfice, rural carrier "exams" everywhere soon. Get prepared by former Government civil service examiner. Booklet free. Arthur Robert Patterson, Rochester, N. Y.

NO STRIKE: 8 HOUR DAY. MEN EVERYwhere. Firemen, Brakemen, Baggagemen, $120. Colored Porters. Experience unnecessary. 686 Railway Bureau, E. St. Louis, Ill.

GOVERNMENT FARMERS NEEDED. BIG salaries. Permanent job. Light work. Write, Ozment, 68F, St. Louis, Mo.

GOVERNMENT EXAMINATIONS — THORough instruction, $5. Returned if not appointed. Particulars free. American Civil Service School, Washington, D. C.

RAILWAY MAIL CLERKS WANTED. Commence $75.00 month. Sample examinations questions free. Franklin Institute, Dep't R 170, Rochester, N. Y.

BE A DETECTIVE. EARN FROM $150.00 to $300.00 per month; travel over the world. Write C. T. Ludwig, 320 Westover Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

ALL MEN—WOMEN DESIRING $85. GOVernment job near home, write immediately. Ozment, K. St. Louis.

SILVER MIRRORS, PLATING TABLEware, auto-brass. Home plans free. Clarence Sprinkle, Dept. 2 Marion, Ind.

FEMALE HELP WANTED

FIVE BRIGHT, CAPABLE LADIES TO travel, demonstrate and sell dealers. $25 to $50 per week. Railroad fare paid. Goodrich Drug Company, Dept 85, Omaha, Neb.

INVENTIONS

INVENTIONS COMMERCIALIZED ON CASH and royalty basis. Inventors and manufacturers write at once. Adam Fisher Mfg. Co., 2044 Railway Exchange, St. Louis, Mo.

AUTOMOBILES

AUTOMOBILE MONOGRAMS IDENTIFY your car. Attached easily. Samples free. Gare & Company, 548 Pontiac Bldg., Chicago

TRAPPERS

SEND FOR FUR PRICE LIST, FREE trappers' guide and particulars of free gift to trappers. Hill Bros. Fur Co., 450 N. Main St., St. Louis, Mo.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

INVESTORS MAGAZINE FREE TO YOU. $100 invested with us has made others $3000 in few months. Our magazine, "Hoffman's Investment Journal," tells how this was done. This magazine gives facts about the real earning power of money. Tells how many have started on the road to fortune. To introduce it we will send three months Free. If you want to make money, write today saying, "send your magazine." Hoffman Trust Company, 339 Kress Bldg., Houston, Texas.

INVEST $10—MAY MAKE FORTUNE. MILlions being made by fortunate investors in Great Coastal Oil Fields. Single wells have produced upwards of $15,000 daily. Absolute guarantee of production furnished. Small monthly payments secure big interest with us in valuable oil leases on which we plan to drill many wells. Write for literature. Great Southern Oil Association, 1300 Carter Building, Houston, Texas.

$15 INVESTED MAY MAKE $1,000 yearly. Gets Warranty Deed, also interest in Co-operative oil well we're getting ready to drill in big gusher oil territory. $1 cash, $1 monthly. Four lots $56. Buy before raise in price, which may be soon. [illegible] Oil Company, 407 Carter Bldg., Houston, Texas.

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The Fairy Corner

CAT'S CRADLE.

Littleness, littleness, how the day lingers,
Up with your hands and your tiny ten fingers.
Magic and puzzles and fun are behind it!
Look at this string! Let's quickly unwind it!

Tie the loose ends with a knot which won't falter,
Knot like the hired man ties on the halter;
Stick up your thumbs and your fingers, my dearie,
Swing the "cat's cradle" until you are weary.

See how the cradle is swaying and dipping!
What? And so soon into slumberland slipping.
Sleepiness, sleepiness, twilight still lingers,
Where are your hands with their tiny ten fingers?

❧

THE DOCTOR.

"Now you are all clean and lovely," said Mrs. Hart as she twisted up the last curl of the last girl. "And you mustn't get into the dirt or muss your hair while I am gone to the station to meet Sammy's mother, for a I want her to see you all looking your best."

"We will be awfully careful," promised the girls, and Sammy said: "I want to be very, very clean for my mother; she loves me the hardest when I'm clean." So when Mrs. Hart drove away to the station to meet her sister she left her own children and their cousin, Sammy, sitting in a stiff proper row on the front porch. Sammy had been left with his aunt and cousins while his mother went to the San Francisco fair, and his aunt wanted his mother to see what good care she had taken of him.

The stiffness of the row of children on the porch didn't last long. First Mollie and Sadie began to play "jacks" on the top step. One of the jacks rolled down [illegible] the grass, and when Sadie got up from hunting it there was a big grass stain right in front of her dress where her knees came.

"Oh, my, just look at that!" she cried. "And I only crawled such a little bit!"

"Come right up on the porch and sit down," said Josie. She was the oldest, tho that wasn't very old, and she thought the rest ought always to do as she said. 'And when Aunt Frances comes you had better stand behind something so she won't see your dress."

After that they sat quietly for a few minutes, then Josie said: "I am going to fix the sprinkler so that it will water my pansy bed. I want Aunt Frances to see them looking nice."

She went to the hydrant and turned off the water and then moved the sprinkler very carefully, stepping on her tiptoes where the ground was damp. When the sprinkler was right over the pansy bed she turned on the water again, but—dear me! She had forgotten that the pansy bed was right by the hydrant, and before she could get away the sprinkler had whirled around four or five times and poor Josie looked as tho she had been out in a rainstorm.

When she was safely back on the porch the other girls wiped her as dry as they could with their nice clean pocket handkerchiefs, and then Mollie said: "I think we had better go into the house. Sammy and I are the only ones left to look nice, and if we stay out here something may happen to us."

"Let's go in and play hide and seek in the house—mamma lets us do it on rainy days, and Josie looks as if it had been raining."

This was Sadie's idea, and it suited everybody, and right away they counted "Eeny, meeny, miny, mo," to see who was to be "it." Molly was the first one to do the hunting. She said that the hall bench was the base, and that it was "no fair" out of doors; then she covered her eyes and began to count as fast as she could, while the others scampered away to hide.

It was a nuisance being so dressed up; it wasn't safe to use some of the best hiding-places because you might get dirty crawling under sofas and behind stoves. Sadie remembered her dress just as she was going to jump into the woodbox in the kitchen, and Mollie cried, "All eyes open!" before she could think of another place, so she was the first one caught. The next time they hid Josie was caught. Sammy had been hiding with her every time so that she could help him get in free, but now that she was "it" he said he was going to hide all by himself.

"I know a lovely place," he whispered to Mollie, as Josie started to count. Then he ran into the parlor, while Mollie followed Sadie upstairs. As soon as he was sure that there was no one to see him, Sammy pulled the piano stool close up to the music rack, and climbed from the stool to the rack and from that went to the top of the piano! There he lay, perfectly still, and when Josie peeped into the parlor as she began her hunt, she didn't think of looking way up so high, and Sammy nearly rolled off from laughing when she went out without finding him.

At first, as he lay there listening, he could hear only Josie tiptoeing about in the hall, but a little later there was a big scramble when Sadie ran downstairs and beat Josie to the goal. One was in free now, and Sammy began to think it was time he tried to run in, but now he found that it was going to be pretty hard work to get down from his fine hiding-place. He wanted to be very quiet, so he waited until he heard Josie go out toward the kitchen. Then he put one short leg down and felt around for the top of the music rack with his toe. It seemed a long way down, but at last he got both feet on the rack and was beginning to feel about for the stool when he thought he heard Josie coming back from the kitchen. After all that trouble he didn't mean to be caught, so he jumped for the stool, and the bad old stool whirled around, and just as Josie opened the door to take another look in the parlor poor Sammy came bumping to the floor, right at her feet.

Josie was dreadfully frightened. She picked him up and called for Sadie and she was frightened, too. At first Sammy was too surprised to say anything or to cry very loudly, and that made the girls think he was too badly hurt to talk. A big red place began to swell on his forehead.

"What shall we do?" cried Josie. "Shall we send for the doctor?"

"There's a big doctor's book in the library," said Sadie.

"I know, but it's all full of big words, and we can't read anything but the Mother Goose book. Call Mollie and see if she will know what to do." Sadie went out in the hall while Josie held Sammy and tried to comfort him.

"Mollie! Mollie! Come here, quick!" shouted Sadie, at the foot of the stairs. But Mollie did not answer or come.

"She thinks it's a trick to catch her," suggested Josie. "Shout 'All out are in free!' and then she'll come."

Mollie was hiding away upstairs, but she heard the call and left her hiding-place. The others could hear her coming, and because she did not know that there was anything the matter she sang as she came, and this is what she sang:

"Jack and Jill went up the hill
  To fetch a pail of water,
Jack fell down and broke his crown
  And Jill came tumbling after.

"Then up Jack got and home did trot,
  As fast as she could caper;
And there his mother bound him up
  With vinegar and brown paper."

"Oh, we can do that!" cried Sadie.

"Do what?" asked Josie.

"Tie up his head with vinegar and brown paper," replied Sadie, running off to the kitchen to get the things without waiting for Josie to answer.

Mollie couldn't think of anything better, so when Sadie got back with the vinegar jug they cut some wrapping paper into strips, wet them with vinegar, and tied them on Sammy's head. [illegible] really more frightened [illegible] way, and by the time the [illegible]ished doctoring him he was as gay as ever, and they all went out on the porch again to wait for his mother.

Once more they sat down in a row, but what with grass stains and water and the vinegar they had spilled, to say nothing of Sammy's bandage, they looked so different that when Mrs. Hart drove into the yard she could hardly believe they were the same children she had left so clean and dressed up and prim one little hour before.

When Sammy's mother saw him [illegible] his head all tied up she jumped [illegible] of the carriage and took him in her arms, but she soon found out that he wasn't badly hurt, and when the girls told her how they learned the way to cure him she said, [illegible] Sammy is sick and I need a real doctor, I shall call for Dr. Mother Goose.'

■

GENTLE JANE.

"If pa's in a hole, as ma said tod
The thing to be done," said Jane [illegible] away
Is to locate a shovel and spade, you'll agree,
And dig him out quickly in time for [illegible] tea."

❧

LITTLE THINGS WORK WONDERS.

"A crumb will feed a little bird,
A thought prevent an angry word,
A seed bring forth full many a flower,
A drop of rain foretells a shower
A little cloud the sun will hide,
A dwarf may prove a giant's guide"

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Chicago Ledger

Entered as second-class matter June 25, 1885, at the postoffice at Chicago, Illinois, under act of March 3, 1879.

Published Every Saturday

By W. D. BOYCE CO., CHICAGO, ILL.

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READERS WEEKLY.

GENTLE JABS

A man has sight; a woman insight.

And a [illegible] than a male.

Even the buckwheat cake has to wait its turn.

Every time a wise man falls it teaches him something.

The cow gives her milk—but the dairyman sells it.

People who tell the truth at all times have but few friends.

Life's a game of give and take—with more takers than givers.

More failures are due to lack of will than to lack of strength.

A man is known by his lawyer; a woman is known by her doctor.

Spite enables a fool to believe he's happy in his unhappiness.

Men are like wagons—they rattle most when there is nothing in them.

Do you earn a living you don't get—or do you get a living you don't earn?

Many a man on the road to fortune doesn't know at what station to get off.

No matter how hungry a man may be, a single taste of defeat satisfies him.

Some men would be awfully lonesome were it not for the visits of bill collectors.

Be careful of your thoughts, for they are liable to break into words at any time.

The man who owes money usually worries less than the man to whom he owes it.

Worry acts as a provoker at times. It makes a fat girl fatter and a thin girl thinner.

When compared with the patience of a mother, all other brands of patience are counterfeit.

You can generally tell false teeth from real ones because they are more perfect than natural teeth.

Many a man who is apparently a deep thinker merely has a new kind of pain and is wondering what caused it

When a girl under 15 is ambitious to become an actress it's up to her mother to do a movie stunt with her slipper.

Too many people in this miserable old world are never happy unless they are bubbling over with unhappiness.

No doubt more young men would be able to earn their own living if they did not have rich and foolish fathers to support them.

The man who marries a widow seldom says anything about his wife's first husband, but there are times when he regrets his demise.

Home and Health

FASHION NOTES.

Metal ornaments, wings and narrow ribbon are about all the millinery decoration we shall see this fall.

The full Lamballe crown is again very fashionable. Indeed, full crowns of all sorts will be the craze of the winter season.

Much embroidery is used on the dressy suits, many of which are orginated in exquisite velour fabrics. Lovely colors are shown for fall. Wine and brown shades are much liked, as well as dull soft green and black. Fur also proves an accepted trimming, and new style touches are revealed in the cut of the collar, revers and sleeves.

The loose "sweater" style of coat has become such an established favorite that nothing can shake it from its throne. All sorts of materials are fashioned in this manner, velvet, satin, brocade, faced cloth and fur. Needless to say that a "sweater" or a Russian blouse made of fur can only be worn by a very slender woman. But then we have many beautiful models which fall in long straight lines, so that every one's taste and figure can be satisfied.

There has been much talk of Breton fashions, and many of them have been seen in the guimpe, long-flowing sleeve, tight bodice, sash, etc., but the real Breton skirt has just come to view. It is a perfectly straight skirt, the fullness gathered evenly at the waist line, making a bunch there that on the stout figure, at least, cannot be becoming. For certain types of gowns, however, this gathered skirt is not inartistic. There is also a Breton train, a separate affair gathered to the waist line at the back of a short evening gown.

◆

FOR THE HOUSEWIFE.

When the clothesline needs cleaning wrap it around the washboard and scrub it with a brush in soapsuds.

To prevent the cork from sticking after opening a mucilage bottle or a glue bottle, wash it off, dry it and then cover it with grease of some kind. Dipping it into [illegible] tallow is the best of all.

White enameled furniture is best cleaned by first removing all the soiled marks with a flannel cloth dipped in methylated spirits. Afterward it should be washed with warm water into which there has been put a little fine oatmeal. No alkalies should be used on it.

To wash rag rugs and summer carpets, try the following method: Dissolve four ounces of good white soap in the same amount of boiling water. When it becomes a jelly, add five ounces of liquid ammonia, two and one-half ounces of alchol, the same amount of glycerin and two ounces of ether or chloroform, if you know how to handle it. If not, best leave the last ingredient out. Bottle and cork and put away to use on blankets, heavy rugs, carpets, etc. Use in the proportion of a teaspoonful of the liquid to a pail of water. Wash the carpet with washing soap in the usual way, stretch out on a flat space and nail the corners so that the rug is taut to prevent shrinking. When dry, take up and shake well.

◆

NEEDLEWORK NOTES.

There are many novelty cushions. Some are for divans and lounging chairs and some for the floor. One is shaped like a big bow. The cover is made of beautiful silk and velvet, and is perhaps four feet long and a foot wide, when finished. It is filled lightly with soft down and is tied with a band of velvet ribbon thru the center. It is really a most comfortable shape to tuck behind the back, and could be made of less expensive materials—thin silk or cretonne. Smocked cushions are another pretty novelty. They are covered with silk, smocked into shape. These are made in light colors for the bedroom or boudoir. For the hammock perhaps the most serviceable cushions are those covered with black and tan cretonne, in small blocks or checks. It is sold especially for cushions for outdoor furniture, as its colors make it show dust very little.

◆

RECIPES.

THOUSAND ISLAND DRESSING—Mayonnaise with whipped cream, pearl onions, quite a bit of chili sauce, a tiny bit of baby tips of celery, chopped fine.

INDIAN CUCUMBER PICKLE—Into a large stone jar put two ounces of mustard, two ounces of curry powder, one ounce of garlic, one ounce of turmeric and one dram of cayenne pepper, also two ounces of cider vinegar, and just as many small cucumbers into the jar as this liquid will cover. Cover the jar tightly and let stand in a warm place for three days. Agitate it frequently.

LUNCHEON DISH—Melt a tablespoon of butter in the frying pan, and one onion cut up and when slightly browned add six fresh tomatoes peeled and cut up or two cups of canned tomatoes, then add salt and pepper to taste. When the tomatoes and onion are cooked beat three eggs and stir into the mixture and when cooked remove from fire and serve hot on toast.

◆

CARE OF YOUR EYES.

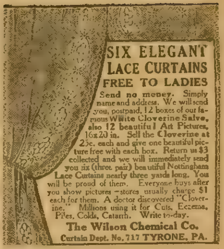
If you value your eyes you should be most careful to observe the following rules:

Always work with the light behind you, coming over the left shoulder, if possible. Weak eyes suffer a great deal if a full, strong light faces them.

Don't rub your eyes. Many persons have the habit of doing this on first waking in the morning. Instead, the eyes should be bathed with cold or tepid water. If, owing to a cold, or weakness, they are inclined to be granulated in the morning, rub a little vaseline across the lids at night, being careful not to get any in the eyes. In the morning bathe them with warm milk and water.

Reading or writing in the train is bad for the eyes. It is also a great mistake to strain the eyes by reading much when recovering from illness.

Don't put off wearing glasses. Some persons think it ages them to wear glasses and, therefore, refuse to have their eyes attended to. If they prefer to suffer that is their own lookout.



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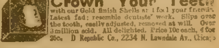

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Lone Scout Indian

MEMBERSHIP BADGE

FIRST DEGREE BADGE

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MERIT MEDAL

135,782 LONE SCOUTS

In 55 Weeks, 135,782 Boys have taken the following pledge as members of Lone Scouts of America:

"I pledge my allegiance to my flag and the nation for which it stands, with liberty and justice for all. I will 'Do a Useful Thing Each Day' and be worthy of the name, Lone Scout."

The Lone Scouts of America was incorporated in Washington, District of Columbia, in 1915. At the first meeting of the incorporators, by-laws were adopted and W. D. Boyce was elected **Chief Totem** of the organization.

The first Lone Scout took the pledge on October 25, 1915. There are now Lone Scouts in every State in the United States, every Province in Canada, in Alaska, Panama Canal Zone, Republic of Panama, Porto Rico, Cuba, Hawaiian Islands, Philippine Islands and other parts of the world.

① The Lone Scouts of America is for all wide-awake, ambitious boys everywhere. It is not a military organization. It is not a money-making proposition. There are no membership fees or dues to pay. There is no expensive equipment for boys or their parents to buy. The organization is supported by the sale of its weekly magazine, "Lone Scout," in which instructions are given to the Scouts. "Lone Scout" is sold by news agents for 3 cents a copy. Subscription rates, 25 cents four months, 75 cents a year.

② The motto of the Lone Scouts of America is: "Do a Useful Thing Each Day." Every boy who lives up to the Lone Scout motto is going to be a successful man. The purpose of the Lone Scouts of America is to give the boys all the advantages of the Boy Scout movement (which was started in the United States by W. D. Boyce, Chief Totem of the Lone Scouts), while permitting them to work alone if it is not convenient for them to belong to Tribes. Wood-craft and scouting are only a part of the instructions in the Lone Scouts of America.

③ The Lone Scout pledge is so worded as to make the organization world-wide, not excluding any boy living under some other flag than the United States flag. The Lone Scout must be in the best of health and physical condition all the time. He cannot be a real Scout and take any drink containing alcohol, or smoke cigarettes.

④ Any boy who can understand the pledge is eligible to membership. As a member progresses in his Scout work he is awarded Degrees, with appropriate Badges, and these Degrees make up Lodges. The First Degree is Lone Scout, the emblem of which is a bronze badge bearing the figure of the Lone Scout Indian; Second is the Woodcraft Degree, the emblem of which is a bronze badge showing the Crossed Logs of the Council Fire. Third Degree is Lone Eagle and the eagle is shown on the silver badge of this Degree, the last of the Tepee Lodge. Next comes the Totem Pole Lodge, in which every member is entitled to put up a Lone Scout Totem Pole, upon which is a record of his achievements for many Degrees.

⑤ In applying for Membership, fill out the Application Blank given below, and send it with 2-cent stamp.

W. D. BOYCE, Chief Totem,
500 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill.

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CHIEF TOTEM, 500 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill.

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Name .... Age ....

Town .... State ....

St. No., P. O., or R. F. D. ....

Lone Scout Boys

Or, For Preparedness

By St. George Rathborne

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Begun in No. 42, October 14. Subscriptions can begin with that issue or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER XII—(Continued).

"YOU'RE willing to leave the rest to the Scouts, are you, sir?"

"The affair couldn't be in better hands," the sergeant told him earnestly. "Boys who have shown such a knack for planning ought to be able to carry things thru in the bargain. Yes, you take your end of the round-up and we'll look after our share."

"Now, about signals, sir," continued Abner. "We will want to communicate with you from time to time, and hope to hear from you. As Scouts we have a code that works splendidly at all times. If you'd like me to explain it to you I can do so in a jiffy."

That part of the program was speedily adjusted, for the soldier was already deeply interested in everything Abner proposed. Folks usually did admire the young leader's bright ways and clever talk. He seemed to draw nine out of ten persons to him, even tho they had never seen or heard of him before. A few boys possess that faculty, which is a valuable trait in any one, and calculated to enhance his chances of success in the world.

Then they hurried back to the others who had been impatietnly waiting for the little consultation to come to an end The sergeant took his seven men, and going up the track a short distance they proceeded t[illegible] a fire a[illegible] and when they meant [illegible] so that they were taking things easy, and never bothering their heads about guarding the bridge.

Abner whispered a few words to his chums, all of whom were eagerly awaiting the next move. Then they, too, started off, only instead of going back, they passed down the embankment, meaning to conceal themselves at a point where they could spy upon the plotters at work.

They were soon in hiding, and had been duly cautioned not to exchange even the lowest whisper. Abner realized that the crisis was rapidly approaching, and believed they could afford to take no unnecessary hazards.

All remained quiet for some little time, except that they could hear the soldiers of the bridge patrol laughing in a carefree fashion. The flickering glow of their fire served to dispel some of the heaviest of the gloom resting on the river and the adjacent bank beneath the long trestle and bridge, which was a favorable thing for those in hiding.

In posting his force, the leader of the boys had figured on just about where the two plotters would be apt to do their work. True, Abner had had no experience along these lines, but then his common sense told him where an explosive would be apt to do the most terrible execution. He and Hi Henry crouched there, hoping to be able to learn something of what was going on.

The gurgle of the river could be heard whenever the laughter of the boisterous guards died down temporarily. It seemed to soothe the excited nerves of the two concealed Scouts by the soft rhythm of its music. But Abner was beginning to feel a new anxiety, which concerned the possible nonarrival of those whose designs they had set out to balk. What if the men had concluded to postpone their dastardly scheme until another night? Remembering that it was partly directed toward the destruction of the heavy munitions train, he assured himself over and over again that such an alteration in the program was not likely to occur; and that Herman and Peter, having set their hearts on carrying out their bold scheme, would not let trifles keep them from making the attempt as per schedule.

Once Abner fancied he heard the far distant and faint whistle of a railway locomotive. He wondered whether it could be the one drawing the freight that had been marked for destruction? What if it should come along ahead of the time set for its passage over the river? Sometimes these specials carrying cargoes of much-needed war munitions were given the right of way, even to the side-tracking of ordinary passenger trains; for speeding them up might mean marvelous things for those armies across the sea in such great need of war stores and high explosives.

Abner hoped nothing would occur to interfere with the arrangements he had made with the obliging sergeant He and his chums had already gone to such great exertions in order to frustrate the [illegible] designs of the [illegible] that he felt as tho they really deserved to meet with a fair measure of success.

Then came a strange sound, and yet one to be expected in that wild country of Canada. It was the hoot of an owl, twice repeated. Abner knew that it never came from a feathered inmate of a hemlock or a pine tree, but that the sergeant himself had emitted the sound, for he had admitted that he was well up in such things, another fact calculated to convince Abner that he must have been a member of the Canadian Northwest Mounted Police, and accustomed to the wilderness

He nudged Hi Henry, who returned the favor just to show that he was wide awake, and had also heard the signal. It meant that the two skulkers had been detected creeping past the camp where the guards were having such a merry time, regardless of their duties of watching the bridge approaches

Of course it was not to be expected that the plotters would come along the elevated track itself, for such a [illegible] would be apt to betray them [illegible] eyes on the watch [illegible] would they creep along toward the foot of the embankment, where the going was possible, as the bushes and vines growing at the base did not extend far up the sides.

Of course, all of the other Scouts must have also heard those owl hoots, and understood their tone significance in the bargain. They would be straining their vision to try and detect the passage of the two creeping men, tho under positive orders not to make the faintest move, or in any other way betray the fact of their presence.

Five, ten minutes passed, and the anticipation was really nerve-racking Then Abner and Hi Henry caught a little sound that might have been caused by a pebble dislodged up on the bank, and rolling softly down a few yards to the base.

From this they understood that the men must be coming, and indeed shortly afterwards they could see a pair of shadowy figures moving cautiously past their place of concealment.

CHAPTER XIII.

MEETING THE CRISIS

OF COURSE the two Scouts hugged the ground closely until the men had passed. The plotters had doubtless counted to see that all the bridge guards were about the fire; and finding themselves in what seemed to be great luck, must have considered that the Fates were working in their favor.

Abner did not mean to attempt to follow after them. He believed that would be entirely unnecessary. Besides, they could not go very far without coming to the edge of the bank where the river ran under the bridge at its junction with the long approach.

Here there was a bulkhead or pier made of concrete, and heavy enough to resist all the strain. And it was around this foundation the men doubtless figured laying the powerful explosives which were calculated to destroy the structure overhead. They had mapped out their work so thoroly that it was not likely much time would be consumed in carrying it into effect. Given ten minutes, they could be ready, so Abner had heard them say when talking things over at the lone cabin

The giant Herman was to place the mines, while Peter would look after laying the secret wire along the track, carrying it well across the bridge so that when the connection was made by the forward wheels of the engine severing the wire the train must be wholly in the danger zone

Watching, the boys saw one of the dusky figures separate itself from the other and stealthily creep toward one of the trestle supports. That would seem to be a good time to pounce upon the rascals, only for the peril lying in those explosives. A desperate man like Herman might, if provoked, fire the fuse, and take chances in leaping into the river himself before the explosion came that would wreck the structure. Nor would he be apt to care much if his confederate were caught in the whirlpool, to meet his fate then and there. Tens of thousands of other bold men were being killed week in and week out over on the battlefields of Europe; and those who strove to strike a blow for the Fatherland on this side of the ocean must expect to accept chances.

Hi Henry in particular was following the course of the creeper with intent gaze, for he knew that it was to be his duty to find that wire and take care of it when the opportunity arrived

It happened that one of the tall Scout's pet fads lay in the line of telegraph work, wireless and the like. He was always deeply interested in everything

(Continued on Page [illegible])

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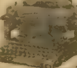

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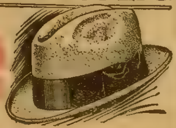

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Lone Scout Boys.

(Continued From Page 19.)

that pertained to such things, and never went even to school without a pair of combination pliers and wire-cutters in his pocket.

This seemed to be an occasion just made for a fellow of his sort, for the wire-cutters would be likely to come in mighty handy before long. Hi Henry's hand sought them out deep down in his back pocket and he fondled the little tool as tho eager for the moment to come when he could get to work.

Now they could just manage to make out the crouching form of Peter. He had reached the top of the bank and was starting out on the bridge, having climbed the uprights of the trestle not far from the concrete pier. Evidently this same Peter was a pretty agile sort of a chap, a regular athlete, in fact; but Hi Henry proudly told himself that he could accomplish any like feat if pushed.

Just where Peter was to draw up the wire they could not say, but if once Hi Henry reached the roadbed above he could undoubtedly readily find it. He had that little hand electric torch of Abner's to use, if other means failed in effecting a discovery.

The minutes dragged along. It seemed as tho an interminable time had elapsed since Peter climbed aloft, and yet that could hardly be, since both men would do everything in their power to expedite things. Time was precious to them, because they were risking their lives in this secret work of "hitting England in the back."

Then the boys, watching closely, discovered that the smaller man had again come back to the point where he first reached the trestle overhead. They saw him making ready to descend, tho first of all he lingered a brief time as tho listening.

What he had heard the Scouts also caught now. It was certainly the rumble of an approaching train. As the time for the freight could not have yet arrived, it seemed as tho something might have been changed in the timetable of the railroad, and possibly a passenger train preceded the one bearing munitions.

[illegible] a strange thrill run thru his whole body as this thought struck him, he could not tell why unless it was the [illegible] idea of perhaps scores of innocent travelers being suddenly sent into eternity because of the machinations of these base plotters.

With this feeling of horror and detestation sweeping thru his mind, it is possible that just then had the Scouts possessed arms Abner might have been tempted to change his plans, and shoot the wretches as they started to leave the scene of their infamous undertaking. Perhaps, after all, it was just as well. The way the leader of the Scouts had figured things out might in the end be best. At least it promised to accomplish the result they had in view without any of the boys accepting too much risk.

Now the other fellow was coming along, too. He had apparently succeeded in placing the dangerous explosives where they would do the most harm when the right moment arrived, and was in a hurry to clear out, knowing the fearful thing that was bound to happen when the electric spark was sent along the wire connected with the little field battery that had been placed.

The man called Peter came down the uprights of the wooden structure very much like a monkey. He certainly proved as agile as one in his actions, and Abner somehow conceived the idea that he must at some time have been a sailor, accustomed to going aloft in calm or storm in order to reef or furl sails.

They lingered only a brief period when coming together. Apparently hurried confidences were exchanged, each telling what had been accomplished. Then, too, possibly they compared notes concerning the coming of the train so far ahead of the scheduled time. Whatever may have been their conviction with regard to this matter, it was now too late to change their program. To remove the battery or the explosives would of course prevent matters from coming to a head, but the chances were they might never again find such an excellent opportunity of accomplishing the destruction of the long bridge across the river, and thus block the steady stream of munitions that was daily flowing toward the coast.

Abner knew that they had decided to let matters go on as arranged when he saw the two shadowy figures start away. The time had now arrived for both himself and Hi Henry to get busy as settled upon beforehand.

"Wait just two minutes, so they'll be far enough away not to see you climbing, and then go at your job with a rush," was what Abner whispered in his chum's ear.

"You'd better believe I will," came the soft reply, with the gurgle of the nearby river loud enough to deaden the speaker's voice.

Then the leader of the Lone Scouts started off.

His was the task to follow and locate the two men's hiding-place, for, as he had told the sergeant, he felt positive that they would never be content to flee from the scene of the expected explosion without witnessing the "fireworks."

On the way Abner expected to pick up the other six fellows, and he believed that by exercising the proper amount of care, as they had learned to do when practicing just this sort of woodcraft, they could avoid making their presence known to Herman and Peter.

After they had located the temporary stopping-place of the invaders it was Abner's plan either to send one of the Scouts back to get the guards, or else go himself, while the other fellows lingered near, ready to attack the desperadoes with a shower of stones if they manifested any intention of leaving in a hurry—this to make them conceal themselves until the reserves could arrive.

Meanwhile Hi Henry was climbing the frame work of the trestle. A less agile boy would have found it a most difficult feat, but Abner had known what he was doing when he set that task for the lanky member of the Tribe. Hi Henry could show some of the traits of a simian when it came to climbing trees and telegraph poles. His chums often used to tell him they did not need to be told what line his remote ancestors sprang from, because he betrayed it in his ability to swing from limb to limb, hang head downward, and do similar "stunts."

That asset was likely to prove exceedingly valuable on the present occasion, apparently, and for once, at least, Hi Henry need not be ashamed of his accomplishments. He "shinned up" the lower supports of the trestle easily enough, for there were plenty of side strips upon which to plant his nimble feet. When he had reached a point halfway he found the [illegible] somewhat harder, but not for a single moment did the boy dream of confessing himself beaten.

He half expected to hear something go off with a loud report in the dark abyss below, for there was always a certain chance that the two men, halting in their flight, might discover the climber, and guessing that their plans were in danger, fire at him. So Hi Henry knew what it meant to accept the perils of active warfare. He lived hours in every second, such was the strain under which he was laboring; but greatly to his relief no shot broke upon the night air, and presently he found himself at the top, with the steel rails of the track close to his hand.

He immediately crouched there and commenced feeling for some evidence of the wire which he suspected had been stretched under the rail. The main object, he understood, would be secrecy. If one of the guards happened to cross the bridge bearing a lighted lantern, so as to carry out a regular hourly inspection to make sure all was well, he must discover the telltale wire unless great pains had been taken to hide the same.

Out over the river Hi Henry slipped. Thus far he had not made any important find, but he did not despair. He could hear the men still amusing themselves by the fire, the glow of which came to him faintly. From tie to tie he passed, always feeling for the wire but failing to touch it. This made him believe that Peter had taken up with him a cord which he managed in some way to get around each steel bar forming the side section of the bridge, until finally, upon reaching the place he aimed for, he had drawn the wire up, Herman on the bank below paying the coil out.

The train was coming on now, for its thunder could be plainly heard. This caused Hi Henry more alarm than anything else. He realized that should he be unable to find and take care of the dangerous wire before the train shot upon the trestle he stood a pretty good chance of being blown up with the bridge.

His acquired knowledge as a telegrapher was likely to stand him in good service now, for that wire would have to be handled gingerly if he hoped to avoid bringing about the very contact that was to set the explosives off. His pliers must not do the work which had been set for the grinding wheel of the locomotive.

Forced to change his tactics by the near approach of the oncoming train, the boy on the bridge span snatched out the little hand torch loaned by Abner, and immediately focused its intense light on the rail before him. In this fashion he crept along foot by foot, his eager eyes strained to detect any sign of the fatal wire.

What if he failed to find it? What if the train came rushing on, and reached the bridge? Hi Henry's forehead broke out in clammy beads of perspiration, while his hand trembled as tho he had the palsy.

He heard the shrill whistle of the locomotive, and realized that this must be intended to tell the guards that the engine driver believed the coast clear. Then, just as he had almost begun to despair, Hi Henry found the wire; and at the same instant he heard a railway torpedo far up the track signal to the engineer to stop.

CHAPTER XIV.

VALUE OF PREPAREDNESS.

SUCH was the intense strain upon the boy's nerves that he could hardly hold the pliers in his trembling fingers. Hi Henry was feeling for the strand of wire that stretched beyond, after the main line had been wrapped around the rail, ready for severing under the grind of the engine wheel flange. Having found this he severed it close to the steel rail, and to his satisfaction discovered that he had something like a yard of material with which to work.

It was his design to make a loop over a cross-tie and suspend the main wire in that fashion, as taut as before. Then it would not matter if the trunk line were severed or not, for the wire would remain firm, and the explosion, so cunningly planned, could not take place.

As he feverishly worked, bent on having his part of the job completed, no matter what happened back there where his seven chums had gone, Hi Henry could tell from the sound of brakes being set that the train was coming to a stop just at the beginning of the trestle. Yes, he could also see many lights as from passenger cars and sleepers, which fact told him his suspicion had been founded on truth—it was an express that had been thrown ahead of the munitions train as a special.

CURED HIS RUPTURE

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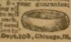

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Hi Henry felt an exaltation pass over him like a wave. He no longer shivered as he contemplated the great peril he had just passed thru, and which was by no means finished. Fatigue and all else seemed swallowed up in thanksgiving when he realized that he and his friends had possibly been the means of saving many precious lives by their exploit of the night.

Just then he heard other sounds besides the blowing-off of steam from the escape valve of the stalled locomotive, and the murmur of many voices, as the bewildered inmates of the cars came streaming forth, inquiring what was the cause of the sudden stop upon the approach to the long bridge. Loud cries sounded, cries that seemed strangely familiar to Hi Henry's ears, for the shrill voices of boys belonging to the Tribe could be heard leading the racket.

Men's hoarser tones accompanied them, too, and Hi Henry wondered whether these sprang from the two conspirators' throats, alone, or were some of the bridge guards also giving vent to their excited feelings.

There, he had made the dangerous wire fast now! Let it be severed at the point where it had been passed around the steel rail, but no explosion would follow as the result of a sudden giving way; Hi Henry had looked out for that. It would now be safe for any one to search for the deadly mine, and detach the wire from the batteries, thus rendering the whole apparatus perfectly harmless.

There being nothing further to detain him there out upon the bridge the lanky Scout started toward the spot where the panting engine stood, with the wondering driver and numbers of excited passengers clustering about it, waiting for some of the strangely absent guards to show up and offer an explanation.

It took Hi Henry some little time to cross, for he had been two-thirds of the way over the bridge, and the trestle lay beyond, where he was also compelled to step from tie to tie.

Just as he arrived at the gathering others made their appearance, so that for the moment no one seemed to notice the lone figure of a tall boy in faded khaki who came in from the east.

There were his seven chums, and all of the bridge patrol; in their midst the two desperate rascals who had plotted to destroy the railroad bridge and with it send to destruction the million-dollar cargo of war munitions. They had evidently been taken quite by surprise when the Scouts jumped upon their backs, so that it had not been possible for either of them to make any use of the deadly weapons they undoubtedly carried on their persons.

While still struggling with their numerous assailants, the sergeant and his men had reached the spot, and after that, of course, the precious pair soon found themselves subdued.

A score of questions poured in upon the boys and guards. Many persons from the train were wild to learn the details of their narrow escape. The sergeant in charge of the bridge patrol did not show a mean spirit, for he persisted from the beginning in giving Abner Kent and his chums the main credit for learning of the terrible plot, as well as doing most of the work in baffling the intentions of the two international schemers.

The passengers crowded around, listening in almost breathless eagerness. Curious eyes were fixed on the faces of the proud Scouts, who tried the best they could to look indifferent, just as tho this thing of saving trains and preventing bridges from being blown up might be an everyday [illegible]

One of the passengers in particular had pressed forward, and was keeping his eyes glued upon the flushed face of the leader of the boys, as tho he could fairly devour him. Unable to restrain his emotion longer, this man suddenly reached forward and laid hands on the Scout.

"Boy," he commenced to say in a hoarse voice, as tho in his excitement he could hardly speak at all, "tell me your name! But why need I ask that, when I can surely see my Abner's eyes looking straight into mine. Oh! What wonderful good fortune has come to me this night of nights, when I was beginning to despair of ever finding you again."

"Father!"

Only that one word burst from the lips of the amazed Scout, and then his arms were tightly wound around the neck of the tall and sunburned man, who in turn pressed the boy fiercely to his heart, to kiss him quickly again and again.

"One word, lad," he presently managed to say or rather gasp. "Your mother?"

"She is at home, and well!" was the welcome news he heard, at which he turned his face aside so that the honest tears streaming down his sun-tanned cheeks should not be too easily seen by the ring of curious and deeply interested onlookers.

It was almost unbelievable that after all these years' absence Captain Kent had suddenly appeared again in the flesh. It "capped the climax," as Wee Willie Winkle afterward declared, to have him actually a passenger on the very train that his son Abner had been instrumental in saving from destruction.

The express special presently went on, since the freight would soon be along, and there was no longer any reason for blocking the track. Hi Henry, accompanied by several of his comrades, as well as the sergeant of the bridge patrol, went below, and had no difficulty in finding the hidden battery, so that with the electric connection cut off the mine became harmless. They also hastened to remove the deadly explosives, which later on were found to be of a nature well calculated to carry out the terrible designs of the two evil plotters.

Unfortunately the men managed to later on escape, thru no fault of the bridge patrol. Their real identity was never fully established, tho it was assumed they must be German reservists who, unable to get across to their native land to fight for the Kaiser, had schemed to strike a blow for the cause in this terrible fashion. At least this incident and narrow escape aroused the Canadian authorities to the fact that a constant peril hovered over their railway property, and the guards were henceforth urged to exercise redoubled vigilance.

In good time the members of the Tribe received positive recognition of their valor which had been so instrumental in saving not only precious lives but property as well.

Captain Kent accompanied the Scouts back to the cabin in the Maine woods, where he meant to spend the night with them. On the morrow he and Abner would have to say good-by to the other

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members of the Tribe, for they could not think of staying away from Walden a minute longer than was necessary, knowing what a glorious surprise they had in store for the patient little woman, who, with the old war veteran, kept house there, believing herself a widow.

The story that the sailor captain spun the boys as they sat about the fire in the comfortable cabin until long past midnight sounded like a veritable fragment from the "Arabian Nights." After his vessel had been wrecked the captain and several of his crew were taken prisoners by the Bedouins of the desert, who came down to the coast occasionally. He had been a prisoner among them all these years, tho not abused, and had been unable to communicate with his loved ones. Then came the stroke of good fortune that had enabled him to save the life of the little son of the head man, which so affected the latter that he showered gifts on Captain Kent; and finding that nothing would satisfy his longing but complete freedom, had finally given him that.

When he reached his native land again, rich in precious gems that were worth a fortune, the sailor captain had started an eager search for his loved ones; but they had been long gone from the place where he last saw them, and somehow thus far he had been utterly unable to get track of his family.

He had been following a clew that would take him far into New Brunswick across the great St. John's River at the time the special train was brought to a sudden stop by danger signals set beyond the long trestle leading to the river bridge; and then and there his lucky star, as we have seen, had led him to discover the face of his boy Abner in the manly-looking young leader of the Lone Scouts.

There were scores of other thrilling things to tell, but these would have to wait for another time. He promised the boys that they should hear everything when gathered under the same roof that sheltered his dear ones. Indeed, all of them were pretty close to the point of exhaustion just then, and needed sleep very much.

In the morning, after a hearty breakfast, which Wee Willie Winkle strove to have the best on record, Abner and his father set out for home. The others were mighty sorry to have them go, but with seven still in camp, they knew that a glorious week lay before them. And besides, Abner had promised to return in a day or so, to finish the vacation with his chums.

"All of which goes to show the value of preparedness," Hi Henry was saying, after the two had vanished from view, and the balance of the Scouts gathered at the cabin door to lay out their program for the day. "If Abner hadn't taken the trouble to make a little map of this region up here when he was with that gentleman who came to collect flashlight photos, he would never have been able to lead us to the bridge by that short cut, so that we arrived long before those two ugly schemers."

"Yes," added Wee Willie Winkle, soberly, "and if Lone Scouts didn't make it a practice always to look ahead, and prepare for possible events before they happened, we wouldn't have known how to creep after those men, and take them by surprise."

"Don't forget," exclaimed Cliff Almwell, hastily, "that it was Hi Henry's preparing himself for the work of a telegrapher and wireless operator that made him familiar with wire-working! A bungler might have just cut that wire and blown up the bridge, as well as himself. I tell you, getting ready for war in times of peace is the biggest thing in the world. And Uncle Sam is going to hit the line hard along that particular when he once wakes up to its advantages."

We would greatly enjoy staying with the Lone Scout boys and seeing what glorious times they had in that woods cabin camp during the balance of their fall vacation, but want of space forbids; so we can only wish them the best of good luck, as we close the account of what preparedness did for one set of Scouts.

The End.

* * *

Wiser Than Solomon.

"No, I'm not get born on de State'! I come here 'bout eighteen year ago from T'ree Reever, Kebec.

"Ma fader, he's dead w'en I'm 7 year ol', an' so I'm go for leev on ma gran'-fader's, who's beeg farmaire; keep plent' cow an' horse.

"Smart ol' man, too; justice peace, notaire publique, an' all dat. Not many case go on de lawyaire, I can tol' you, eef dey see ma gran'fader firs'. He's all for keep peace 'mong de neighbor.

"Two mans dey have some leet'l troub', an' mebbe got mad queek, an' wan of dem start for get de law.

"On way for see de lawyaire dis man mebbe has for pass on de house w'ere ma gran'fader leev, an' if he's see de ol' man on de houtside, ver' offen he's stop for spik wi' heem, an' 'fore he know it he's tol' heem ev'ryt'ing.

"De ol' man he's not spik mooch, jus' lissen. Den bimeby, affer de man get troo for spik, he mebba say, 'Wal, wal, dat's too bad, Joe. I didn't t'ink dat could happen affer w'at 'Poleon do for you w'en you're seeck last winter. I don' guess he's so bad feller. Sure dere's not somet'ing wrong on bot' side, Joe? Better go for see heem, an' mebbe talk de t'ing over.'

"But of course Joe he's ver' mad, an' say, 'Oh, non, non! You bet I don' go near for see heem no more.'

"Den de ol' man say, 'P'r'aps, den, it's better I did go to see 'Poleon myse'f. Too bad for see good frien' quarrel dis way.'

"Wal, my gran'fader he go over for see 'Poleon, an' w'en dey spik leet'l w'ile 'bout de wedder an' de crop, de ol' man he say, 'W'a't's all dis trobl' 'bout you an' Joe Gallant, ma frien'? Joe, he's over to ma place an' feel ver' bad. T'ink you don' was use heem jus' right.

"'Joe's yer' good feller, leet'l' rough sometam, but you 'member how he's take hees team from plowin' an' go roun' an' collec' monee w'en your barn got burn las' fall. Spen' 'ole week in busy tam, an' got mos' hun'red dollar for you. Dat's good neighbor, 'Poleon. But now can you blame eef he's not feel so good w'en your seven cow an' heifer break down de fence an' tramp hall night hees nice fiel' o' grain?

"'Course you forget for feex de fence, but de ol' cow didn' forgot to tramp de buckw'eat.

"'Wat you better do?

"'Wal, I t'ink eef you geev to Joe ten dollar in money, beside feex de fence, dat mak' it hall right.'

"'Poleon hees feel ver' bad—de ol' man spik so nice and quiet—an' affer w'ile he say:

"'Wal, M'sieu' Legere, I don' forgot dose t'ings Joe Gallant do for me, so eef you will take ten dollar over to Joe, I ver' satisfy.'

"Ma gran'fader he's tak' de monee an' go w'ere Joe was wait, and say, 'Wal, Joe, 'Poleon he's not so bad feller, affer all. He's sen' dis ten dollar over to you, an' is start for feex de fence right away. An' he say dat he's not forgot how you collec' for heem monee w'en hees barn was burn.'

"W'en de ol' man get troo for spik, Joe he's feel ver' mean, an' say right out, 'I don' wan' dat ten dollar, an' w'at is more, I tak' it back to 'Poleon w'en I go home.'

"'Oh, non, non!' de ol' man say. 'I have de ten dollar. Dat's mine, sure t'ing. But for ma share in de leet'l troub', I ta' de monee an' go buy nice bar'l flour an' some odder t'ing for poor Mis' Larue, w'at's los' her man las' mont', an' have sex leet'l' boy for feed. Den I tell her dat's from you an' 'Poleon. Dat's better dan pay de lawyaire, Joe.'

"Wal, Joe he's jus' laugh an' laugh, an' w'en he's got for spik, he's jump hup an' shake ma gran'fader's han' an' say, 'Wal, wal, M'sieu' Legere, you one fine, fine ol' man!'"

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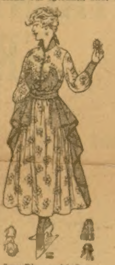

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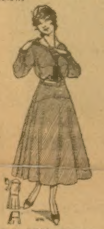

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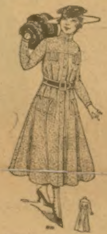

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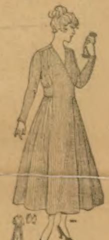

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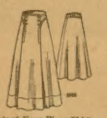

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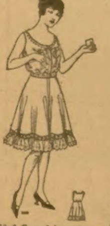

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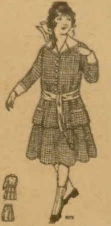

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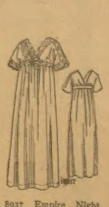

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Here is the way we will do it: To every one who will send us one dollar for a year's subscription to the Chicago Ledger we will send absolutely free five pattern coupons. Each coupon will be good for one pattern and you can select the patterns from those illustrated in any issue of the Chicago Ledger. When you see a pattern that you like all you have to do is to send us a coupon and it will be sent to you at once. In this way you will have hundreds of patterns from which to pick the five that you will be entitled to, and you have all the time you need to pick out the ones you want.

These patterns are the best that can be made. Each pattern gives full directions for the cutting and making, with information as to the amount of cloth required, etc., so that any one can make any of the designs illustrated with no trouble at all. At the same time, they are so stylish and accurately cut that dressmakers and seamstresses all over the country will be quick to take advantage of this liberal offer. Some will subscribe for two years so they can get ten coupons. These designs are made by the best designers and modists of New York and Paris, and are up-to-the-minute in fashion and beauty.

We treat old and new customers alike on this splendid offer. If you are already a subscriber send in a dollar and we will send you the five pattern coupons and extend your subscription one year from the time it now expires.

To get these five coupons entitling you to five patterns, fill out the blank below and enclose it with one dollar for a year's subscription to the Chicago Ledger. Do this now—today! No woman should be without the Ledger's Pattern Coupon Book. Be among the thousands of women who will get these coupons.

..............................CUT THIS OUT AND SEND TO US..............................

THE CHICAGO LEDGER, 500 N. Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill.

Enclosed please find one dollar for a year's subscription to the Chicago Ledger. This entitles me to Five Pattern Coupons. **Canada Subscription Price $1.50 per year.**

NAME..

Street No.
or R. F. D...

Box............Town...

This is a..................Subscription. State.......................
(New or Renewal)

If you wish any pattern from those advertised in this issue, mark the number and size on the margin and we will retain a coupon for each pattern we send you when we send you the Coupon Book. (Order by size and number.) Coupons good for six months.

"More men are fighting fat in America, than are fighting each other in Europe"

from an interview with the famous Dr. Sargent of Harvard University, one of the greatest authorities on physical culture in the world. — *New York World, April 30, 1916*

PEOPLE WHO WOULD GAIN A VICTORY IN THIS FIGHT WITH FAT, SHOULD USE THE PROPER METHOD TO ATTACK IT

REDUCE YOUR WEIGHT AND BEAUTIFY YOUR FIGURE

PROOF TREATMENT FREE

Note what my treatment has done for others. It may do the same for you

RECOMMENDS TREATMENT

Mr. Westbrook Says: "It Does Me Good to Tell Others the Good You Have Done for Me."

F. Thompson Brough: Mississippi.

Dear Doctor—I am in receipt of a letter from an old friend of mine who has heard of your wonderful skill on reducing flesh. I have answered his letter and told him that I would write to you and let him get in touch with you. It does me so much good to tell others the good you have done for me.

Yours respectfully,
A. W. WESTBROOK.

LOST 60 POUNDS

Mrs. Barnes Says That She Can Now Go to Church Without Being Laughed At. "I Never Tire Telling Just How It Came About."

Dear Doctor: Missouri.

I now will write you a few lines in regard to my case. When I began your treatment for obesity I weighed 215 pounds, bust 46 inches, waist 39 inches, abdomen 55 inches. I am happy and proud that today I can say that I weigh but 155 pounds, bust 38 inches, waist 30 inches, abdomen 40 inches, and I am in much better health than for years, but best of all I can go to church without being laughed at. My figure is so greatly improved that it is pleasing to me to note how surprised everybody seems to be. I never tire of telling just how it all came about.

If all over-stout people would just stop and think in what a short time they could be their former self again, and look like somebody, they surely would take treatment. I tell everybody I see who is stout about your great remedy.

Your faithful friend and patient,
MRS. SARAH BARNES.

LOST 83 POUNDS OF EXCESS FAT

Mrs. Shantz Says She Also Got Rid of Her Rheumatism Which Has Bothered Her for Years, at Same Time She Lost 83 Pounds of Fat. Mrs. Shantz Is 61 Years of Age.

Dear Doctor: Illinois.

I am very much pleased with your treatment. I think it is all right. It surely has been a great blessing to me. I have gotten rid of 83 pounds of flesh and all my rheumatism, which has bothered me for many years. I had much bother with my arms and hands. I could not sleep if I did work where I used my hands. I would have to get up at night and walk the floor. This is changed now. I sleep all night so sweet and nice. I feel like a new woman, though I am 61 years old. It is pleasure for me to work.

Thanking you for the interest you have taken in me, and wishing you success for the good you are doing for humanity, I will recommend your treatment.

Yours respectfully,
MRS. DAVID SHANTZ.

LOST 56 POUNDS

Hip Measure Is 9 Inches Smaller and Waist 4 Inches Smaller. Is Feeling Fine.

Dr. F. Thompson Brough M. D. Michigan.

Dear Doctor and Friend—I reduced 56 pounds and am feeling just fine. I measure hips 49 inches, where I was 58 inches, and waist is about 4 inches smaller. I can think and plan my work now, where before taking the treatment I did what I was absolutely obliged to do and sat down so tired and would probably go to sleep.

With best wishes for your success, I am,
MRS. G. W. SAMMONS.

REDUCED OVER A POUND A DAY

Mrs. Williams Reduced a Pound a Day As An Average.

Dr. Brough: Montana.

Dear Sir—I will answer your letter I received this morning. I am glad you take so much interest in my welfare. As long as I took your remedies I reduced over a pound a day as an average. If you should want to use my name and address you are welcome to do so at any time. Anyone you should refer to me I will gladly tell them of the benefit I received from you. You certainly did me good and everywhere I go, if I meet a fat lady, I always speak a good word for you.

Thanking you for your kindness, I remain,
MRS. TOM WILLIAMS.

REDUCED 60 POUNDS

Mrs. Ruggles Says That the Loss of Flesh Has Been Remarkable.

F. Thompson Brough: Missouri.

Dear Sir—I thought I would write you a few lines to let you know how proud I am that I tried your simple home treatment. I am at normal weight and never felt better in my life. I have got as good use of myself as I ever had and can do anything I want to without tiring me. I can walk 10 times as far and not tire me half so bad. I lost 60 pounds of weight, which was that much more than I could comfortably carry. I think that there is reality in taking your treatment. The loss in weight has been remarkable. I thank you.
MRS. A. M. RUGGLES.

PROOF TREATMENT AND BOOK OF VALUABLE ADVICE FREE

I will send you PROOF TREATMENT FREE; you may reduce your fat at the rate of a pound a day. Don't miss this offer. My PROOF TREATMENT is FREE. It should make you feel better at once. I also send you free my book of advice, also testimonials from many well-known people. Write today. See my address below. Fill out the coupon and return to me.

Let me prove to you that my treatment can positively reduce you to normal, no matter where excess of fat is located; stomach, bust, hip, cheeks, neck, double-chin; it should healthfully, quickly, safely, permanently be reduced without exercise or dieting; your figure will then be beautified, clear, pure skin; no flabbiness, no wrinkles. Lost vigor restored, rheumatism, asthma, shortness of breath, kidney and heart troubles, female ailments leave as the fat goes away.

My method is very simple and consists of certain healthful remedies which you use in accordance with my simple directions.

The idea of my treatment is to neutralize the fat producing processes of the system, so that the excessive flesh will perfectly disappear from all parts of the body, whether it shows itself in a fat stomach, double chin, protruding bust or large hips, while at the same time it is purposed to put the organism in a state of healthy vigor.

Many of my patients report a loss of 3 to 5 lbs. a week, with a constant improvement in health and spirits.

There is no charge whatsoever for the test treatment which I will send when I get the coupon.

With the free treatment I enclose a copy of my latest book on Self-Reducing. It should be in the hands of all who are over-fat and of THOSE COMMENCING TO PUT ON FLESH. It tells you what you may do, and what you positively must NOT do while reducing.

It tells some of the causes of obesity, the dangers of overstoutness and the proper treatment for reduction. How wrinkles and flabbiness disappear. How vigor and strength may be restored by reducing the excess fat. How men and women may be attracted to each other by the effects of solvent evolution. Send in the coupon now.

Dr. F. T. BROUGH

2122 BROUGH BUILDING, East 22nd Street, NEW YORK

WHAT A WOMAN SHOULD WEIGH	WHAT A MAN SHOULD WEIGH
4 feet 10 inches.. 97 lbs	5 feet 2 inches..125 lbs
4 " 11 " ..101 lbs	5 " 3 " ..130 lbs
5 " 0 " ..104 lbs	5 " 4 " ..135 lbs
5 " 1 " ..108 lbs	5 " 5 " ..140 lbs
5 " 2 " ..112 lbs	5 " 6 " ..144 lbs
5 " 3 " ..118 lbs	5 " 7 " ..148 lbs
5 " 4 " ..125 lbs	5 " 8 " ..153 lbs
5 " 5 " ..131 lbs	5 " 9 " ..159 lbs
5 " 6 " ..135 lbs	5 " 10 " ..166 lbs
5 " 7 " ..141 lbs	5 " 11 " ..170 lbs
5 " 8 " ..148 lbs	6 " 0 " ..175 lbs

If you weigh over the limit you can get rid of the fat by the Dr. Brough method.

Cut out and mail THIS COUPON

DR. F. T. BROUGH,
2122 Brough Bldg., East 22nd St.,
New York City:

As per offer in the Blade and Ledger, please mail me your **FREE PROOF TREATMENT**, in plain wrapper, with book, testimonials, etc.

NAME ....

FULL ADDRESS ....